

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، للراي

Hostage families in Beirut

BEIRUT (AP) — The mothers of two Swiss relief workers kidnapped in southern Lebanon four months ago arrived Sunday, bearing a petition with 70,000 signatures calling for their release. Jung Shamp, the spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) travelling with the family members, called the abduction of Emmanuel Christen and Elio Brignone "inhuman, hurting victims the pain came here to serve." Both men worked as orthopaedic technicians at a Red Cross clinic in South Lebanon's port city of Sidon. The centre closed down right after the two technicians were kidnapped Oct. 6 in Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut. The arriving family members were Mrs. Graziella Brignone, the mother of Elio; Marie, his twin sister; Antoine, his older brother; Christen's mother Marianne and his sister Annette Meyer-Christen. They are accompanied by Christophe Haralick, the ICRC official responsible for the Middle East and North Africa.

Troops sent to Caucasus region

MOSCOW (AP) — Soviet troops have been deployed in a remote region of the Caucasus mountains where tensions are mounting between ethnic Georgian and Ossetian communities, reports from the area said Sunday. A spokesman for the National Front of South Ossetia, an autonomous region within Soviet Georgia, said Georgian soldiers were leading in the area's ethnic tensions. "Georgian soldiers have been leading in the area's ethnic tensions," he said. "We are victims in a state of siege. There is no chance for anyone to get out." He said reinforcements of Russian military troops had been moved into the area, where Georgian had been setting up a paramilitary force between the two groups erupted in November. Scores of people were injured in the fighting. It was not immediately known how many troops were involved or when they were sent to the area in the southeast of the Soviet Union.

Volume 15 Number 4284

AMMAN MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 1990, JUMADA AL THANI 11, 1410

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Syria 1 pound; Lebanon 1 pound; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams; Great Britain 25 pence

King returns from Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein returned to Amman Sunday evening following a two-day visit to Baghdad where he led Jordan's delegation to celebrations of Iraq's Army Day. The King also held talks with President Saddam Hussein on pan-Arab, bilateral and international affairs. Talks between the two leaders also centred on preparations for the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) summit scheduled to be held in Amman in February.

King Hussein, who was accompanied by Prime Minister Mader Badran, Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odah and Army Chief of

Staff General Pasha Abu Taleb, was seen off from Baghdad by President Hussein and other Iraqi leaders. Upon departure from Iraq, the King sent President Hussein a cable expressing appreciation for the hospitality accorded to the Jordanian delegation and paying tribute to Iraq's endeavours, which, he said, reestablished self-confidence in the hearts of the Arab people.

The Army Day parade held in Baghdad presented another proof of the might of the Iraqi people and armed forces which serve as an effective means for steadfastness in the face of aggression and



Iraqi children greet His Majesty King Hussein and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during a military parade held in Baghdad Saturday on the occasion of Iraq's Army Day (Petra photo)

a tool to deter the aggressors, the King said.

Earlier Sunday, Badran and First Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister

Taha Yassin Ramadan visited the royal cemeteries in Baghdad and recited verses of the Holy Koran. They also visited the tomb of

the late Iraqi Defence Minister Adnan Khairallah, the Saddam Arts Centre and the Iraqi National Museum.

Jordanian conscript missing; Israel says 'infiltrator' killed

AMMAN (J.T.) — A conscript with the Armed Forces has been missing since Saturday from his post at the Al Himmeh area near the demarcation line with Israel, an army spokesman said Sunday. "Members of his unit began looking for him but have not yet found him," said the spokesman in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The statement followed reports that Israeli soldiers had killed a "Jordanian soldier" in a "gunbat-

tle" Sunday in the same area. Israel Radio said the "infiltrator" opened fire on Israeli troops with his M-16 rifle from a concrete bunker on the bank of the Yarmouk River. An Israeli army communiqué said the man was killed in a shootout after being found beyond the demarcation line.

An Israeli army force detected a Jordanian soldier inside "Israeli territory". He was shot and killed. There were no injuries to our forces," the statement

said. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem was quoted Sunday as saying Israel opened fire on Jordanian territory last week to try to divert attention from the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. "What Israel tried to do in the past few days... opening fire towards Jordanian territory for no reason... was part of its constant efforts to shift attention away from the internal pressures it is

facing to other areas," Qasem was quoted as saying by Sawt Al Shaab newspaper. The Israeli army had claimed that its patrols came under fire on five different occasions in the past week and that the fire came from the Jordanian side of the demarcation line. But Jordan dismissed the claims and said Israeli patrols opened fire from their side of the line with no apparent reason. In one incident, Israeli fire was directed at two unarmed farmers, the Armed Forces said.

The Lower House of Parliament Saturday condemned Israeli acts of provocation. Fatah Uprising, a Syrian-based Palestinian group, claimed it mounted cross-border attacks Thursday and Friday, killing or wounding several Israeli soldiers. There was no independent confirmation of the claim by Fatah Uprising, led by Saeed Musa, a dissident Palestinian leader opposed to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Israeli bullets claim two more Palestinian lives

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Bethlehem gave a martyr's funeral to an Arab killed by Israeli army gunfire, marking the joy of Eastern Orthodox Christians who on Sunday marked the birth of Jesus in the occupied West Bank town.

The memorial ceremony for Fadi Al Zabakli, 22, at the Church of the Nativity recalled the bleak celebrations of other Christians during the nearly 25-month-old Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation. Mokassed hospital in Arab Jerusalem said Zabakli died Sunday after being shot in the head by the army 10 days ago. Troops shot dead a second Palestinian Sunday near Tulkarm in the West Bank, residents said.

Bethlehem closed down for the funeral attended by 2,000 mourners. Soldiers barred journalists from Manger Square beside the church where the New Testament says Jesus was born. Palestinians said Zabakli was an Eastern Orthodox Christian. His funeral passed without violence.

The American television network ABC, in Bethlehem on the day of the clash, showed Zabakli was in a group of masked stone-throwers but the circumstances of the incident were disputed. The army said the soldiers adhered to a policy enabling them to open fire only if the masked men ignored commands to halt. But witnesses said there was no command.

The London-based human rights group Amnesty International last week criticised army orders allowing troops to shoot at masked Arabs even when the soldiers' lives were not in danger. Troops shot dead the second Palestinian in Attil village near Tulkarm, villagers said, raising to at least 610 the number of Palestinians killed by Israelis since the revolt erupted in December 1987. Residents identified the victim as Kamal Abu Khalil, 18. The army was checking the report. Military sources said troops clashed with masked youths in the West Bank village.

Troops were searching at the time for masked attackers who forced Arab workers off a bus and set it ablaze in nearby Ithana. Palestinians have urged West Bank and Gaza Strip workers to boycott jobs in Israel. Israeli postal authorities in Tel Aviv said they recovered several new letter bombs but declined to discuss their number or origin. Last week they reported receiv-

ing booty-trapped letters from Cyprus and Greece. In the Gaza Strip, hospitals said three Palestinians were wounded in clashes with troops.

9 banned from travel

The Israeli occupation authorities have banned nine Palestinian activists from travelling abroad. Palestinian leaders said the three-month travel bans imposed by Interior Minister Aryeh Dori were an attempt to disrupt U.S.-backed efforts to arrange a Palestinian-Israeli meeting in Cairo.

Those targeted included Sari Nusseibeh and Faisal Husseini, the two most prominent Palestinians involved in behind-the-scenes diplomatic efforts. Husseini complained that the occupation authorities were trying to nominate their own Palestinian representatives for the proposed talks and block any role for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"Israel is trying to go back to its old policies, and they are discovering day after day that such actions will not succeed in creating a new local leadership," he said in an interview Sunday. Also included in the ban were Nabih businessman Saeed Kanam, women's activist Zuhair Kanam and a delegation of five Palestinian trade union leaders who were to attend a conference in Egypt, Palestinian sources said.

Nusseibeh was reportedly turned back at the bridge while en route to Jordan and others had planned trips to Egypt, which has been consulting Palestinians about a list of 10 negotiators to meet with Israel. Kamal, who had planned to attend conferences in Cairo and Boston, Massachusetts, said he believed Israel was trying to "exercise a veto" over participants in the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

The English-language Jerusalem Post and Hebrew Maariv dailies said the travel bans appeared aimed at disrupting contacts between local Palestinian leaders and the PLO in Tunis.

The interior ministry issued a statement saying Dori banned the Palestinians from leaving because "he was convinced there was a serious suspicion that their exit abroad could harm state security because they could have met with hostile elements."



Shalikh Ahmad Yassin being wheeled into an Israeli military court in the occupied Gaza Strip for the opening of his trial last week for allegedly masterminding the kidnapping and killing of two Israeli soldiers

Afghan rebel leader reports secret talks with Moscow

ISLAMABAD (AP) — A powerful Afghan rebel leader said Sunday that the guerrillas are holding secret talks with Moscow.

"Negotiations have already started between the Mujahadeen (rebels) and the Soviets," said Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the orthodox Hezb-i-Islami rebel group.

The rebel leader declined to say where the talks were being held, or who the participants were. However, he said the guerrillas were asking the Soviets to stop arming the government in the Afghan capital.

"There are many things to negotiate with the Soviets," Hekmatyar said. "We are asking them to stop aiding Kabul, to stop interfering. We are talking about future relations between our two countries."

He refused to speculate on the possible outcome, but said recent events in Eastern Europe "have created a lot of hopes that the Soviets can adopt similar policies in Afghanistan."

That was in reference to Moscow's non-interference in nations that moved in recent months to abandon single-party Communist rule.

Soviet embassy officials in Islamabad could not be immediately reached for comment.

Western diplomats say Moscow sends about \$300 million worth of munitions and humanitarian aid to Kabul each month. Washington, meanwhile, provides \$500 million worth of military supplies annually to the rebels.

Hekmatyar's group is the only one of the seven major rebel organisations headquartered in

Pakistan to urge a mutual arms cutoff. For more than a decade the rebels have been fighting to oust successive Communist governments. Until a year ago, they were also battling Soviet combat troops, who marched into Afghanistan in December 1979 to help crush a growing insurgency.

More than 100,000 Soviet soldiers fought alongside Afghan government troops in a United Nations-brokered agreement providing for their withdrawal, which was completed last February.

Western diplomats and rebel sources predicted the Kabul government would collapse shortly after Soviet soldiers withdrew. But 11 months later it is still in power and controls all major cities. The rebels control about 90 per cent of the countryside.

Beirut fighting rekindles fears

BEIRUT (AP) — Army troops loyal to Michel Aoun and Syrian-backed militiamen traded mortar and tank fire across Beirut's dividing green line for a second day Sunday, kindling fears of a new round of all-out civil war. Police said the 45-minute flare-up along Beirut's five-kilometre demarcation line jolted residents of the low-income districts of Sodeco and Ras Al Nabaa out of bed at dawn.

Thousands scurried to basements and bomb shelters as the thunderous blasts of mortar and artillery shells echoed across the city.

Militias entrenched in Ras Al Nabaa accused soldiers of Aoun of starting the clash. Aoun's command said in a statement "Syria's surrogates" were behind the escalation.

Green line fighting Saturday killed two civilians and wounded

two. The clashes also forced the closure Saturday of the museum crossing, the only gateway between the two sectors of the capital. Police said it was the gravest violation of a ceasefire called by the Arab League on Sept. 22.

The truce had halted six months of murderous artillery duels between Aoun's forces and the Syrian-backed militia in which 520 people were killed and 2,744 wounded.

The toll was further strained by overnight mortar duels between Aoun's troops and Druze militiamen at the mountaintop town of Souq Al Gharb, 25 kilometres southeast of Beirut. No casualties were reported.

"The accelerating tempo of the violations is alarming," said a police spokesman. "There is no cohesive mechanism to curb the

breaches." The hostilities reflect a deepening political crisis resulting from Aoun's defiance of the internationally acclaimed government of President Elias Hrawi, who was elected by parliament Nov. 24.

Hrawi, a Maronite Catholic, fired Aoun as army commander and interim prime minister and formed a "national reconciliation" government to try to end the country's 14-year-old civil war.

But Aoun, also a Maronite, rejected the move and held out in the Christian enclave his troops control north and northeast of Beirut.

Aoun's defiance is threatening to cement the de facto partition of Lebanon and block an Arab League-brokered plan to introduce political reforms for Christian-Muslim coexistence.

PLO deploys more forces in former Hizbollah positions

KFAR MILKEH, Lebanon (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) deployed more guerrillas in South Lebanon Sunday to separate battling Shiite militiamen as Syria and Iran called for an immediate ceasefire.

Security sources said some 100 men loyal to PLO leader Yasser Arafat moved into positions vacated by fighters of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God). The positions in Kfar Milkeh formed a small part of territory which Hizbollah seized from the Syrian-backed Amal militia in two weeks of fighting in the Iqim Al Tufah area, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

Clashes with mortars and machineguns continued in parts of Iqim Al Tufah where the PLO has not deployed, the sources said.

In Damascus, Iran's First Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Besharati held talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa and representatives of Amal and Hizbollah to find ways of ending the fighting. A Syrian government official source said Besharati and Sharaa called for an immediate ceasefire and said the two militias should withdraw to the positions held before the fighting erupted.

PLO official Mohammad Ali said his group had completed 90 per cent of its mission to separate the warring sides. "Contacts are underway now with both groups for more deployment in other positions," he said.

The PLO now has 600 heavily armed guerrillas spread along the three kilometres battle zone from Kfar Hata to Kfar Milkeh. At least 74 people have been killed and more than 270 wounded in the battles between Hizbollah and Amal, vying for leadership of Lebanon's 1.3 million Shi'ites.

People who had fled their villages during the fighting began to return Sunday.

"The people of my village have

started to return because the situation is improving," said Hassan Salaman, from Kfar Hata. Besharati, who visited Lebanon and Syria last month, was expected in Beirut later Sunday.

The rival militias have largely ignored repeated appeals by Damascus and Tehran to end the fighting for control of territory north of Israel's self-declared buffer strip in South Lebanon.

A peace agreement between Amal and Hizbollah collapsed after Amal refused to allow Hizbollah fighters into the south, from where they can launch attacks against the Zionist state.

Palestinian officials said the PLO was trying to keep the fighting away from the 'Ain Al Hiweh and Mich Mieh Palestinian refugee camps, only a few kilometres from the battle zone. PLO sources said another goal was to stop Hizbollah gaining ground in the direction of the camps, in case it linked up with anti-Arafat and Palestinian fundamentalist groups there.

East Germany's New Forum demands Communists ease grip

LEIPZIG, East Germany (Agencies) — East Germany's biggest opposition group New Forum threatened Sunday to call a general strike if the ruling Communist Party did not loosen its grip on power.

New Forum voted at a congress in Leipzig to hold nationwide demonstrations Jan. 15 demanding a more accountable government ahead of free elections due in May.

If there were no visible steps towards Communist Party reform by Jan. 20, the umbrella opposition group said it would call for all-out industrial action.

"We consider it important to keep a strike call as one of our options," congress chairman Heiko Litz said in a statement. New Forum said it wanted the Communist Party to publish its financial accounts, give public access to investigations into corruption by the former leadership and prove it had fully disbanded the hated Stasi secret police.

Although the Communists have expelled former party leader Erich Honecker and most of his Stalinist government toppled in a popular uprising last year, many opposition groups doubt the sincerity of the new leadership's commitment to reform.

New Forum is suspicious of government assurances that former members of the Stasi, officially dissolved in December, have no access to weapons. It fears the Communists might build a similar security force to intimidate voters in the May 6 elections.

"Demands and warnings are no longer possible in this country," one regional delegate at the congress said. "The Sed (Communist Party) must be forced into

changing." Others were sceptical how effective a strike call would be. "People in the factories are not very keen to hold stoppages," one delegate said.

East German Economics Minister Christa Luft appealed to workers last month not to strike, saying it could do great damage to the country's teetering economy.

The Communists still control the trade unions, but it is not clear how workers would respond if they tried to stop an opposition-inspired strike.

According to opinion polls commissioned on both sides of the Berlin Wall, the Communists command the support of between a quarter and a third of the people, well ahead of any other political force.

However, massive weekly demonstrations in Leipzig, due to resume Monday after a Christmas break, have increasingly called for German reunification, which the Communists oppose.

In an apparent attempt to attract support before Monday's march, Communist Party leader Gregor Gysi called Saturday for all foreign troops to leave East Germany by the end of the century.

He also proposed that East and West Germany should have their own armed forces by next year.

Split in opposition

Meanwhile, the United Left pro-reform group said it has withdrawn from the opposition's election alliance 90 coalition, announced only three days ago, East Germany's official ADN

News agency reported. The Social Democrats, another reform group, had announced that six movements were banding together to boost their election chances.

But Bernd Gehrkes of United Left was quoted by ADN as saying his group was "misleadingly presented" in the announcement by the Social Democrats.

However, Gehrkes said his group was open to other alliances "if suitable common policies can be worked out."

Social Democrat leader Steffen Reichke had said in the announcement that his party had joined with New Forum, Democratic Awakening, Democracy Now, the Initiative for Peace and Human Rights and the United Left.

The 150 delegates from New Forum branches around the country have declared that election of individual, independent candidates was preferable to voting for political parties or alliances, and that New Forum candidates would rather run alone.

Regulations on campaigning and balloting are to be set out under a new election law, a draft of which is expected to be published before Thursday's parliamentary session.

Differences among opposition groups have also become apparent during the weekly negotiations among the various reform movements, the Communists and other political parties.

The talks were initiated Dec. 7 to provide a forum for drafting reforms and airing the views of the citizens' groups that have no representation in the government.

Lebanon's poor face another bleak new year

By Simon Martin
Renter

BEIRUT — In the nightclubs and chic restaurants of Kaslik, you'd never know there was a war on.

After 14 years of civil strife in Lebanon, a surprising number of people in the country's Christian enclave still find the money to enjoy a night out in style.

But glossy magazines advertising watches, jewellery or Scotch whisky cater for the conspicuous consumption of a minority. The majority will face a new year of increasing deprivation or acute hardship, charity workers say.

"Before, there was a large middle class," said Maurice Abu Jaoudé, a voluntary worker at the Catholic Centre for Information.

"That class has almost disappeared, by emigration or by joining the ranks of the poor. The very rich stayed very rich."

Abu Jaoudé and Father Antoine Gemayel, director of the centre which coordinates church charity work, say the lifestyle of an affluent few is misleading.

An acute economic crisis exacerbated by the war has caused the average Lebanese on both sides of the green line dividing Beirut severe hardship, they say.

The minimum wage has just been raised to 35,000 Lebanese pounds (\$67) a month. An average unskilled worker can

expect to earn around 55,000 pounds (\$105).

All government schools in Christian east Beirut are full and a place at a private school costs around \$400 a year, Father Gemayel says. Many schools were hit in the six-month artillery war last year, reducing places still further.

The Roman Catholic charity Caritas, which operates throughout Lebanon, and other charities, help with fees. Parents also make great sacrifices to educate their children.

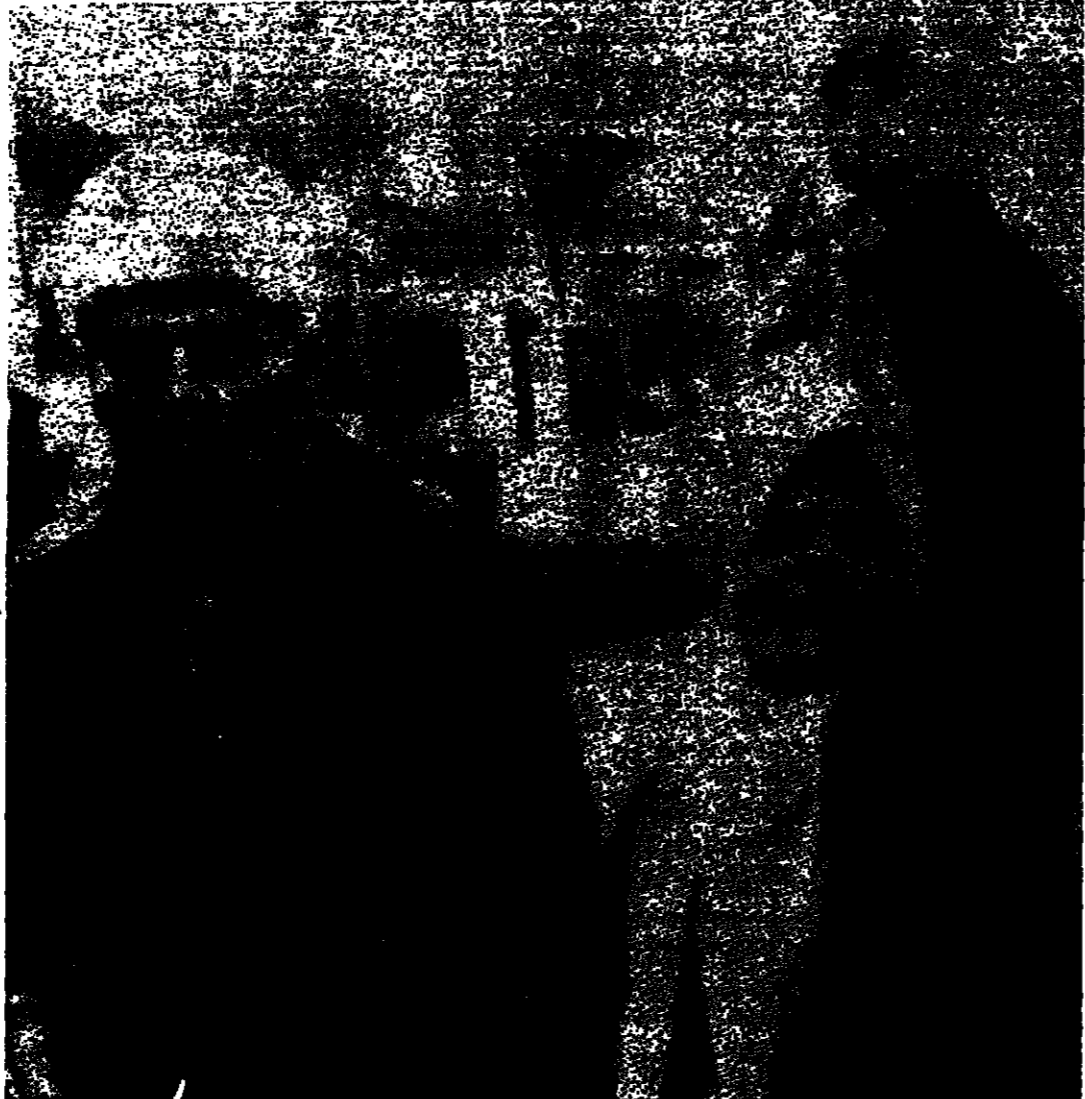
"They sell land, they do the impossible, to send their kids to school," Father Gemayel said.

Hospital care can also bankrupt a family. Every hospital in the Christian enclave and most in west Beirut were hit in the shelling.

East Beirut has three free hospitals but those forced to use private wards can expect to pay \$150 a day without surgery, Father Gemayel says.

Some half a million people have fled to the Christian enclave from other areas during the war, putting acute pressure on housing. Many have ended up in Nabaha, a teeming district of crumbling shell-pocked apartments and potholed roads next to the Beirut river.

Many refugees were agricultural workers without employment skills suitable for city life. Some 60 per cent of all Lebanon's factories were in any case damaged in the shelling war and Father Gemayel



A man and his wife hold machineguns in South Lebanon in support of the Amal militia in its fight against Hizbollah for domination of Lebanon's Shi'ite community

estimates unemployment at 22 per cent.

The figure would be dramatically worse but for the fact that some 850,000 people emigrated since the war started in 1975.

The Lebanese pound, around four to the dollar in 1985 and

540 this month, is chiefly to blame for the plight of Lebanese. Because the country produces so little of its needs, almost all prices rise with the dollar even though wages are in pounds.

"When the dollar goes up,

prices go up. When the dollar comes down prices stay the same," said Abu Jaoudé.

A pair of shoes costs half an average worker's monthly salary. New clothes, left alone a new car, are an impossible dream for many.

Egypt urges Arabs to unite against Iran

CAIRO (Agencies) — Foreign Minister Ismail Abdul Meguid Sunday commended Iraq's proposal for reviving stalled peace talks with Iran called on Arab leaders to form a "united Arab stance" against Tehran's refusal of the plan.

Abdul Meguid told reporters that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's offer reflected his country's wish for a peaceful end to the Iran-Iraq conflict.

His comments were carried by the Middle East News Agency. "The peace initiative that President Saddam Hussein has announced reflects Iraq's peaceful attitude and its concern to establish a comprehensive peace," Abdul Meguid said.

"The initiative is a step which deserves commitment from all sides and we call on Iran to accept it. And Arab leaders should study the Iranian position in the case of its rejection of the initiative to create a united Arab stance against it," Abdul Meguid added.

The Egyptian foreign minister did not specify what actions Arab leaders should take against the Iranian rejection.

Iran has already dismissed as a "campaign of public deception" Iraq's proposal for a direct dialogue between the two countries' leaders to be held alternately in Baghdad and Tehran under supervision of the United Nations.

Qatar, Algeria voice concern

Algeria and Qatar called on Sunday for a lasting peace agreement between Iran and Iraq, saying the current deadlock could harm all Gulf states.

"Continuation of this negative situation will harm the interests of... Iraq and Iran and the region," said a joint statement at the end of a three-day visit to Algeria by Qatar's emir, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani.

A United Nations-sponsored ceasefire halted the eight-year



Ismail Abdul Meguid

Gulf war in August 1988 but talks on a peace accord have stalled. This statement, quoted by the Qatari News Agency, expressed support for the Palestinian uprising and Palestinian demands for self-determination, including their own state.

It described Israeli tactics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as inhuman and urged the world to stop troops violating international norms.

3 Soviet Muslims cross Azerbaijan border into Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — Three Soviet Muslims crossed into Iran's Azerbaijan province at the weekend and returned home after a day-long visit carrying souvenirs and copies of the Koran, state-run Tehran Radio reported Sunday.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, said the Soviet Azerbaijanis crossed the Araks River which forms part of the Soviet-Iranian border and visited with Iranian Muslims in the village of Poldasht Saturday.

It did not say if the men swam across the river or used boats.

Four Soviet youths cut barbed wire border fences on the Araks River and swam to the Iranian side a week ago. A fifth companion drowned.

Rampaging protesters demanding unification of Soviet Azerbaijan with the adjacent northern Iranian province also populated by ethnic Azerbaijanis tried to break open the border in recent demonstrations.

TASS, the official Soviet news agency, said 7,500 protesters destroyed guard observation towers, electronic alarm equipment and communications lines along the border in the unrest that began Dec. 31.

It said one person was killed in a clash among the protesters, but did not disclose a figure for the

injured or say when exactly the incident happened.

Border guards did not use their weapons and none was hurt despite threats against them, it added.

The seeds of the unrest were sown Dec. 4, when a crowd of Soviet Azerbaijanis gathered at the border and called through loudspeakers on their Iranian neighbours to unify their regions, the state-run Soviet newspaper Izvestia reported earlier.

The Iranian report on the latest Soviet visitors coincided with a report on Moscow Radio that the Azerbaijan government has promised to allow more access to arable land on the banks of the Araks River and to take measures to make it easier to cross the border into Iran.

The Azerbaijanis are an ethnic group who, like most Iranians, are largely Shi'ite Muslims. Some four million Azerbaijanis live in northern Iran, while the population of Soviet Azerbaijan is estimated at 6.8 million.

Soviet officials had expressed concern about Islamic fundamentalism creeping across the border after the rise of the Islamic revolution to power in Iran in 1979.

Iran's deputy foreign minister, Mahmoud Vaezi, was in Moscow

this weekend and was expected to raise the issue of free movement across the border for Azerbaijanis with Kremlin leaders.

The English-language Tehran Times said in an editorial Saturday: "An agreement on free border crossing between the two governments... will greatly help to alleviate the seething emotions of people who wish to see their ancestral land and visit long-lost relatives."

The newspaper warned: "The Kremlin should avoid suppressing the Azerbaijanis people at all costs."

It added: "Iranian authorities have already begun moves for preparing the grounds for Azerbaijanis Muslims to visit Iran's holy shrines and religious institutions."

IRNA said that following meetings between Iranian and Soviet officials in Moscow Friday, the two sides agreed to ease travel restrictions between the two countries and issue visas within 15 days. It did not say who these officials were.

Soviet Azerbaijan was acquired by Russia in the 1800s. In 1941, the Red Army moved into northern Iran and the Soviets set up a puppet state there. But after an international outcry, the troops pulled out in 1946.

Israeli legislator calls for probe into Noriega 'adviser'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — An opposition member of parliament has called for an official inquiry into former Israeli spy Mike Harari's links with ousted Panamanian leader Manuel Antonio Noriega.

But Harari, in his first television interview since U.S. forces invaded Panama, denied he was Noriega's right-hand man and described such reports as "disinformation and psychological warfare" against him.

Yossi Sarid, a left-wing member of the parliamentary foreign affairs and defence committee, said it must investigate Harari's role in Panama in recent years.

"There is no doubt that Harari was Noriega's right-hand man and we have to check if Noriega laundered drug money also with this right hand to clean it," Sarid said in a statement.

Harari told Israel Television he was a private businessman who had some civilian dealings in Panama and he only knew Noriega socially.

He said he was in Panama at the time of the U.S. military invasion on Dec. 20 but escaped of his own accord. Some reports said the U.S. had captured Harari and released him under pressure from Israel.

A former intelligence officer in Israel's Mossad, Harari resurfaced in Israel Friday when excerpts from his interview were shown on Israel Television. The full interview was screened Saturday.

"They said I was Noriega's adviser...I'm not an adviser, I wasn't in the past. I'm not number one and I'm not number two. Noriega is not a partner of mine," Harari said.

"I did not supervise his affairs. I did not supervise or train his forces. I did not organise his personal guard. I am simply a

private individual involved in business."

He said he decided to appear on television to dispel rumours and clear his name.

Harari, 62, was widely believed to have been a key adviser to Noriega and his bodyguard.

U.S. officials in Panama said last week that U.S. forces had captured Harari, but they later said there appeared to have been a mistake. Harari said he was never in U.S. custody.

On Wednesday, the operational commander of the U.S. invasion force, Lieutenant-General Carl Stiner, said Harari had escaped U.S. forces looking for him and had fled to Israel.

The head of Panama's new security force, Lieutenant-Colonel Eduardo Herrera, told Reuters that two unidentified Israelis had tipped off Harari about the U.S. invasion six hours before U.S. troops landed.

Security sources said Harari, who escorted Noriega on an official visit to Israel in the early 1980s, was a useful go-between for Israel in Panama until his role became embarrassing when the United States sought to oust Noriega for alleged drug dealing.

Harari told Israel television he arrived in Panama by chance in the early 1968 and planned to spend 24 to 48 hours in the country.

"A Jewish friend offered me to meet a young major, in this case it was Omar Torrijos (Herrera)," Harari said, adding that Torrijos was described as a person interested in Israel.

Harari said he was reluctant, but then "I was pressured and asked...and when I met this personality, chemistry was at work between us, and instead of 15 minutes I spent seven hours with him. We became friends."

"Several months after this young major was promoted to the rank of colonel and then led a coup in October 1968," deposing President Arnulfo Arias, Harari said.

Harari said he continued to visit the "great leader" Torrijos several times a year. During one of the visits, in 1980, Torrijos introduced him to Noriega. Shortly after, Torrijos was killed in an accident, and Noriega came to power three years later.

Harari said he voluntarily resigned from "government service" in 1980 and became a private businessman.

"When I resigned, I decided not to deal with intelligence and security, because this is what I was doing in the past, and not to engage in weapons trade...I tried to deal in agriculture, promote housing and trade projects, and (sell) equipment but only civilian equipment," he said.

Harari described his relationship with Noriega as "friendly" and said:

"I knew Noriega as a wise, energetic, patriotic man, a cunning man who has an outstanding ability to survive, to make friends, to organise, to hold the reins of power and coordinate state affairs."

"Noriega is an American creature...the Americans have created and developed and raised him. Noriega was pro-American and still is pro-American, I think, in spite of his present position," he said.

Harari indicated he thought the United States was behind media reports about his involvement in Panama, which he termed "a campaign of disinformation and psychological war against me."

He denied newspaper reports about his alleged trips to Colombia and Nicaragua, saying he had never visited these countries.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iranian radical backs kidnappers

NICOSIA (R) — Former Iranian Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi has publicly given his blessing to Lebanese kidnappers believed to be holding 17 Western hostages. "In my point of view," he told Tehran Times in an interview published Sunday, "Lebanese Sunnis, Shi'ites, Druze and Christians are the hostages of the United States, Israel and other Western powers."

"So it's their natural right to take hostages to inflict heavy blows on their enemies. No negotiations but force is the answer to what the enemies of the Lebanese have done against the deprived nation," said Mohtashemi, who was instrumental in forming the Iranian-backed Hizbollah in Lebanon. The fundamentalist group is believed despite its denials to be holding most of the 17 Westerners missing, presumed kidnapped, in Lebanon.

Mohtashemi, a hardliner dropped from the cabinet by reformist President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was elected to parliament in a Tehran by-election last month.

North Yemen denies Israeli claim

SANA (R) — North Yemen denied Sunday reports by an Israeli newspaper that it would consider allowing Israelis of Yemenite origin to visit relatives in their homeland. "North Yemen's policy does not allow anyone with Israeli or South African passports to visit Yemen. It also refuses entry to passport holders with Israeli or South African visa stamps," Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani told Reuters. Israel's mass-circulation Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper said Friday leaders of the Yemenite Jewish community had received a message from Iryani saying he would consider positively requests to visit relatives. Iryani denied sending such a message. Some 45,000 of Yemen's 45,000 Jews moved to Israel in 1949 and 1950. Several hundred remain in North Yemen.

Turkey amends prison regulations

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey's justice ministry has enacted prison changes designed to improve conditions which have been criticised by international human rights groups. Under the changes, prison authorities are barred from chaining inmates or using other bodily restraints except for handcuffs when a prisoner is taken from one location to another. The decree said "inhuman, humiliating disciplinary action" is forbidden. Cells will be lighted at all times and inmates in isolation cells will be under medical supervision. Inmates serving sentences of 10 years or less will receive an annual three-day leave from prison. Visiting privileges, formerly granted only to the closest kin, will be expanded to cover grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles and in-laws. Inmates will be allowed privacy when visited by relatives or their lawyers. Any letters of complaint written to officials by inmates will be sent to the proper addresses without any tampering, the decree said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children's programmes
15:50 News summary in Arabic
15:55 World News
16:00 Local programme
16:05 Programme review
16:10 News in Arabic
16:15 Arabic series
16:20 Programme review
16:25 News in English
16:30 Local programmes
16:35 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

16:40 Nick, Cassette des Etes
16:45 News in French
16:50 Weekly Sport magazine
16:55 News in Hebrew
17:00 Varieties
17:05 Empty Nest
17:10 News and Abet
17:15 News in English
17:20 Comedy

PRAYER TIMES

05:49 Fair
06:31 (Sunnah) Duha
11:39 Dhahar
14:24 Asr
16:47 Maghrib
18:10 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweitich Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 622785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 717131
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy to cloudy and scattered showers are expected. Winds will be northwesterly moderate. In

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Min./max. temp.

Amman 4 / 12
Agaba 8 / 19
Deserts 3 / 14
Jordan Valley 9 / 17

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Agaba 19. Humidity readings: Amman 76 per cent, Agaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalid Ma'adi 743500
Dr. Mohammad Al Sawwa 732056
Dr. Ahmad Al Nakour 653934
Dr. Ahmad Odehman 786384
First pharmacy 641912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asama pharmacy 637055
Nawroth pharmacy 636071
Al Salam pharmacy 630730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660

IREED:
Dr. Zaid Al Bakri (-)
Al Shamsa pharmacy 985236

ZARQA:
Dr. Hussein Mahmoud (-)
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 690341
Rescue 199
Fire Brigade 892228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 121
(Director's assistance) 910230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Registars 661101
Jordan Telephone Repairs 773111
Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-33200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-33200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 613613/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Al-Khaleel Maternity, J. Amn 644442/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642363
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664174
Suleimani Hospital 843945
Al-Musaher Hospital 667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali 666122/7
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 777101/3
Italian, Al-Mohafza 775111/26
Arny, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 6224930
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
1645 Cairo, Agaba (RJ)
1645 Cairo, Agaba (RJ)
1645 Vienna, Istanbul (RJ)
1645 Camblanca, Tunis (RJ)
1645 Bangkok (RJ)

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (05)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (05)220-55, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 Vienna (ad.) (RJ)
07:45 Baghdad (RJ)
09:00 Damascus (RJ)
09:00 Kuwait (RJ)
09:00 Cairo (RJ)
09:00 Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:00 Istanbul (RJ)
09:00 Paris (AF)
09:30 Baghdad (AF)
10:15 Vienna (ad.) (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Damascus (RJ)
10:15 Kuwait (RJ)
10:15 Cairo (RJ)
10:15 Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Paris (AF)
10:15 Baghdad (AF)
10:15 Vienna (ad.) (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Damascus (RJ)
10:15 Kuwait (RJ)
10:15 Cairo (RJ)
10:15 Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Paris (AF)
10:15 Baghdad (AF)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:10 Sana (LJ)
10:00 Baghdad (IA)
10:00 Cairo (MS)
10:00 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
10:00 Kuwait (KU)
10:00 Jordan (RJ)
10:00 Istanbul (RJ)
10:00 Paris (AF)
09:30 Baghdad (AF)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:00 Vienna (ad.) (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Damascus (RJ)
10:15 Kuwait (RJ)
10:15 Cairo (RJ)
10:15 Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Paris (AF)
10:15 Baghdad (AF)
10:15 Vienna (ad.) (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Damascus (RJ)
10:15 Kuwait (RJ)
10:15 Cairo (RJ)
10:15 Doha, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15 Istanbul (RJ)
10:15 Paris (AF)
10:15 Baghdad (AF)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:15 London (BA)
06:15 Beirut (AE)
06:15 Frankfurt (LH)
06:15 Cairo (MS)
11:00 Baghdad (IA)

Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)

12:45 Kuwait (KU)
12:45 Tripoli (LJ)
13:00 Baghdad (AF)
01:35 Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in lbs per kg.
Apple 200 / 250
Banana 400 / 450
Beans (Mushroom) 400 / 450
Beans 350 / 400
Cabbage 100 / 150
Carrot 150 / 200
Cauliflower 150 / 200
Cauliflower (large) 150 / 200
Cauliflower (small) 100 / 150
Dates 250 / 300
Eggplant 80 / 100
Garlic 600 / 700
Grapefruit 200 / 250
Lemon 200 / 250
Mango (large) 100 / 150
Mango (small) 100 / 150
Onion (dry) 250 / 300
Onion (green) 200 / 250
Orange (Siam) 250 / 300
Pepper (hot) 300 / 350
Pepper (sweet) 300 / 350
Potato 200 / 250
Raddish 150 / 200
Sage 200 / 250
Spinach 150 / 200
Tomatoes 200 / 250

Arab-Americans emerging as political force — Zogby

By Marwan M. Shalabi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Arab-American community is moving towards the mainstream of the American political arena and making itself heard, possibly for the first time in the country's history, according to James Zogby, founder of the Arab-American Institute (AAI).

Zogby, who is here on a private visit, held a press conference Sunday to brief the press on the activities that his organization has been involved in. He also expressed his views, as a long time lobbyist of Arab causes in America, on where he thinks America is going with its Middle East policy.

"We are not in the process of creating a counter lobby to the Israeli lobby in the United States. We are still in the pre-lobby stage but we do want to take part in American politics. As Arab-Americans we have the same right to do that as Italian-Americans or Greek-Americans or any other group of Americans," Zogby told the press conference.

An increased awareness of the technical aspects of the American political machinery, Zogby said, is helping Arab-Americans get the kind of "Alderman, legislative and senatorial help they need as American citizens. The 'Arab' issues such as Lebanon and Palestine can now be lobbied for in the halls of the (Capitol) Hill rather than on the (White House) lawn."

"We have worked very hard to educate Arab-Americans about the workings of American democracy so they are aware of how to use it properly. It's a system that works, you just have to know how to use it."

"We now have several Arab-American organizations, some of which I co-founded, which are dealing with the various political aspects that are of concern to Arab-Americans and Arabs in the Middle East alike," Zogby said. "The Arab-American Institute is concerned with the specific area of electoral politics, the rules by which it works and advancing the electoral power in our advantages."

Although some people may not see the significance of such

work on the surface, in a democracy like America, it is vital if one wants issues brought to the surface. Voter registration, candidate training and Arab-American issues are among the areas on which the AAI concentrates," according to the lobbyist.

The institute has been an essential pro-democratic factor in the Arab World and in other parts of the world, Zogby says.

"Eastern Europeans have said openly that the institute had a direct impact on the events in Eastern Europe. The whole world is moving towards democracy and events here in Jordan, in Algeria, Tunisia, and Yemen all support that trend. Israel is the odd man out; it is the Cossack of the world."

"Arab-Americans are more than willing to help their Arab brothers in the Middle East learn more about the techniques and tactics of democracy. I am here to say, 'we support you, we are with you, we express solidarity with your moves,'" Zogby added.

Politics, says Zogby, is the key to the power of change in the American foreign policy towards the Middle East.

Although the American public has been drenched with Zionist propaganda for the last 60 years, Zogby says that several Arab leaders, including His Majesty King Hussein and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt enjoy more popularity among the American public than any Israeli leader past or present.

"The way to the heart"

"While we, the Arab-Americans, work for the success of our interests within the American political arena, Arab leaders also have to change their approach to America. Arab heads of state should be less worried about speaking at the U.N. in New York or conversing privately with the U.S. president behind closed doors in Washington than they are. When Israeli leaders go to America, they organize huge rallies which thousands attend in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles and then they go to the White House. In America the way to the heart of the people, you need 'grass-root support'," says Zogby.

Zogby stressed that one of the reasons American politicians were paying more attention to Arab-Americans was that they were turning out in greater number at the polls and turning up more frequently in the American political arena.

The tactics used by the Israeli lobby, which have received wide news coverage in the past years, Zogby believes, only underline "the weakness of their moral position."

"Many congressmen fear the Israeli lobby, while many of them really like us. I would rather be liked than feared. Friendship will win over fear in the end," Zogby asserted.

He also referred to the campaign contributions made by the Israeli lobby to many congressmen, "when the Israeli lobby has to dish out \$100,000 for every congressman that they need to get (pro-Israel) legislation through, then I don't think those congressmen don't believe in Israel, they believe in money. Our role is to neutralise the role of money," Zogby asserts.

Zogby sees the latest U.S. "peace initiative" as "just another scenario in the Kissingerian mold. It was to create an illusion of action where there is none. American leaders are simply not ready to make bold courageous moves yet."

"American politics can only change from within and Arab-Americans and Arab leaders alike have to work to make that change happen," Zogby asserted. "We are convinced now that we are just as intelligent and capable as the Jews in America; we have finally shed off the myth that our enemies had implanted in our minds for the longest time that, namely that they are superior to us," he added.

"We still have a long way to go but day by day we are growing stronger. Every time we are successful the heathen rage — I say let them rage, we will only win more friends as a result," Zogby concluded.

In the weekend issue of the Jordan Times, Zogby speaks to focus on people and elaborates further about Arab-Americans, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and the future of American aid to Israel.



LOWER INTEREST? One of the promises made by the government is lower interest rates on loans extended for housing. But it is not clear yet whether the promised lower rate applied to housing units already built with loans granted by the Housing Corporation (such as the Abu Nadr estate (above)). Photo by Youssef Al 'Aliani.

Iraqi parliament speaker in Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — Parliamentary relations between Jordan and Iraq and ways to promote them were discussed Sunday in a meeting held between parliamentary delegations representing the two countries. The Jordanian side was headed by Lower House of Parliament Speaker Suleiman Arar and the Iraqi side by Iraqi National Assembly Speaker Saadi Mahdi Saleh.

The meeting also focused on the meeting of the four-member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) parliamentary committee to be convened in Baghdad by the end of January.

Saleh arrived earlier Sunday and was received in the airport by Arar.

In a statement he gave to the press upon arrival, Saleh said that parliamentary life in Jordan is unique, and that Jordan's step in

reviving parliamentary life is considered to be an important transition.

Saleh said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's peace plan is one of recent several offered by the president since the war started between Iran and Iraq. "These proposals show Iraq's willingness to achieve peace with Iran," he said. Saleh said that Hussein's proposal was welcomed on the Arab and international levels. But, he added, "the Iraqis are usually so rejected the initiative and questioned its credibility."

Saleh expressed his hope that Iranian officials be more reasonable in order to reach a real peace, settlement. Saleh is accompanied in his visit by Iraqi parliamentarian Faiq Makki Ahmad.

Government to study ownership of press

By Rabab Maseh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government of Prime Minister Mubarak Badran plans to reexamine the status of the Jordanian press and reconsider the question of newspaper ownership, Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin said Sunday.

The prime minister has specifically stated that there should be a clearly defined concept separating ownership of newspapers and freedom of expression, Izzeddin said in a statement to Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times.

So far, the government has made the chief editor the sole responsible person for the respective newspaper and "now we are following in the footsteps of the former government of Shariif Zaid Ben Shaker in reconsidering the ownership of all Jordanian newspapers," Izzeddin added.

He said separation between ownership of a newspaper and

editorship should mean no pressure on free expression in writing.

Asked whether the government had detailed plans for a new set up in the press, the minister said, that the government "will inevitably reexamine the newspaper ownership question, but so far it has not formulated a detailed decision on this issue."

On Dec. 11 the Economic Security Committee (ESC) reversed a decision taken in August 1988 to assume administrative and editorial control of the country's three major newspaper establishments. Subsequently, the management of the three establishments — Al Ra'i, Al Dustour and Sawt Al Shaab — was returned to the original boards of directors.

The ESC statement said the new arrangement was limited for a period of one month, during which special arrangements will be taken to elect new boards of directors.

As the date for the board's meetings gets closer, questions have been raised about the reason behind the lack of an official decision about the government's shares in the three papers.

The government became a major share holder of the three papers Jan. 1, 1986, after transforming the papers from private into public shareholding companies.

The government owns 61 per cent of the shares of Al Ra'i Arabic daily, 53 per cent of Al Dastour and 85 per cent of Sawt Al Shaab, which was originally established as a public share holding company.

The ESC's Dec. 11 decision said that the new boards of directors would be entrusted with the task of developing the role of the press in light of the new openness in the press.

The coming few days will no doubt clarify the mystery around the future of the newspapers' ownership and their boards of directors.

Two private universities to accept students in 1990

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two private universities will open their doors for students at the start of the 1990-1991 academic year with a joint capacity of 2,600 students, according to spokesmen for the two universities quoted by the Al Ra'i Arabic daily Sunday.

Approval was given by the Council of Higher Education last July for the establishment of the Amman Private University in the Balqa Governorate and the University of Applied Sciences in the Amman area.

The Amman Private University and the University of Applied Sciences will raise to six the total number of universities in Jordan. The four existing universities are government-controlled.

The paper quoted Dr. Ahmad Hourani from the Amman Pri-

University as saying that at least 2,000 male and female students would be accepted in the first semester in the coming academic year, half of whom would be Jordanian expatriates. "We will start off with three faculties — commerce, law and arts — and the students will pay fees totalling JD 1,500 annually like fees for other college in the University of Jordan, Mu'ta University, Yarmouk University and the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)," Hourani said.

He said Jordanian students would pay their fees in the local currency but the expatriates would have to pay in U.S. dollars.

So far, the Amman Private

University has contracted 50 teachers from Jordan and other Arab countries to teach at the university, Hourani said.

He said that work was under way at the permanent site of the university at the Sam district, about 10 kilometres west of Amman, and there were prospects for completing construction work by May 30, 1990.

He said the university was being set up on 60 dunams of land and could be easily reached from Salt, Amman and Zarqa, which are the main population centres in the Kingdom. He said the Jordanian United Investment Company, which owns the university, had allocated JD 5 million as initial capital for the new institution.

Ministry to concentrate on development in badia area

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Agriculture will give special attention to the development of the badia region and is currently making plans and executing programmes for the development of pasture areas in the semi-desert regions, Minister of Agriculture Suleiman Arabiyat said Sunday.

All programmes in the badia region will be geared towards achieving socio-economic development and improving the living standards of the area's residents, the minister said during an inspection tour of the region, which included the Shomari and Al Azraq wild reserves and Al Kharranah, about 50 kilometres east of Amman. He was briefed on farm lands in the area by local officials.

Cooperation between local governors and residents is of paramount importance in order to ensure the implementation of development schemes sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, Ara-

biyat said.

He said special attention was being given to cooperatives at Azraq, where livestock projects are being initiated and irrigation schemes are being launched.

Ministry of Agriculture officials accompanying Arabiyat on the inspection tour said that the Azraq oasis was estimated to be 300,000 dunams in area, part of which was planted with some 80,000 shrubs over the past two years by Ministry of Agriculture teams to help create pasture lands. This year, the ministry plans to grow shrubs on an additional 20,000 dunams, they said.

Shomari and Azraq wildlife reserves are among seven reserves in Jordan serving as a natural habitat for several species of animals threatened with extinction. The two reserves are under the control of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), which has been in contact with Arab and foreign countries to rehabilitate rare species

and provide them with a natural habitat.

Shomari reserve is now home for the Arabian oryx which at one time was on the verge of extinction as well as several species of birds and deer.

RSCN officials said that a number of world organisations concerned with the conservation of nature were contemplating the idea of transforming the Shomari wildlife reserve into a centre for conducting scientific research for producing improved breeds of animals threatened with extinction and to supply breeds to Arab countries in the region.

The minister's tour of the badia region came at a time when the Ministry of Agriculture is preparing to plant millions of fruit and forest tree saplings marking Arbor Day Jan. 15. Most of the trees this year, the Ministry of Agriculture said, will be planted at the edge of the desert in Jordan to stem desertification.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

HOUSE RURAL COMMITTEE TO MEET: Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Suleiman Arar has called the House's Rural and Badia Committee for a meeting Tuesday to elect a chairman and a rapporteur. The legal committee is to convene Monday to discuss the cancellation of a law on the Amman Development Department and amendments to the apartment blocs law, the foreigners and alien law and the occupied Arab affairs law. A parliamentary committee set up to investigate the clashes at Yarmouk University will hold a meeting Tuesday (Petra).

HOUSE SESSION POSTPONED: The Lower House of Parliament will hold its next session Saturday instead of Tuesday, Speaker Suleiman Arar said Sunday. No reason was given for the delay.

NEW MOSQUE OPENED: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Al Fagir Sunday opened a new mosque at Marfa district. The minister prayed at the mosque and delivered a speech on the occasion. The opening of the Makheimar Abu Jamous mosque was attended by a number of government officials, who said that the construction cost amounted to JD 90,000 (Petra).

WORLD CYCLISTS IN JORDAN: Two Indonesian cyclists, who left their country in November 1987 on a world tour, are now in Jordan, the ninth stop in their round the world trip. Mohammad Amin Fawzi and Ahmad Hamadani said they were happy to visit Jordan from which they will head towards Iraq and then Saudi Arabia and Kuwait before going on to Africa and the Americas (Petra).

JORDANIAN PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION: A total of 52 pharmacists Sunday were sworn in as members of the Jordanian Pharmacists Association before Health Minister Mohammad Adoub Al Zaben. Following the swearing ceremony, there was a general discussion on the association's programme, difficulties encountered by Jordanian pharmacists and cooperation with the Ministry of Health (Petra).

AQABA JOBS: Employment seekers in Aqaba district in the past year totalled 1,350, and work was found for 1,202 of them, according to a labour department in Aqaba. The department Director Jamal Abu Tayeh said that work permits to non-Jordanians in the past year totalled 2,474, down from 4,603 in the previous year (Petra).

U.S. LABOUR AID: U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Roscoe Suddarth Sunday visited minister of labour Qassem Obesdat to discuss American assistance to Jordan in labour-related fields. Their discussion dealt with vocational training for Jordanians and ways to stem unemployment and support private sector projects (Petra).

SAPLINGS DISTRIBUTED: The Department of Agriculture in Tafleh district has started distributing fruit and forest tree saplings to organisations and individuals in the governorate of Tafleh to be planted during the current agricultural season. The saplings are being planted in the semi-arid as well as arable lands to stem encroachment of the desert. Jordan is to celebrate Arbor Day Jan. 15. Various tree-planting ceremonies will be held around the Kingdom to mark the day (Petra).

MAAN SPENT JD 58,000: Maan Municipality reported Sunday that it spent JD 58,000 on various services projects in the past year. The funds were spent on road building, the construction of retaining walls at several places and lighting of streets (Petra).

Yarmouk to cooperate with Texas universities

IRBID (J.T.) — President of the Federation of American Universities in the state of Texas visited Yarmouk University Sunday and met with its president, Ali Mahafzah, to discuss bilateral cooperation in cultural and higher educational fields.

At the meeting, which was attended by several university deans and heads of departments, discussion centred on coopera-

Ministry seeks to boost Saudi Arabian tourism

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Tourism Abdul Karim Al Kabariit discussed with a visiting Saudi delegation here Sunday prospects of boosting the number of Saudi Arabian nationals visiting Jordan's tourist sites and spa.

The delegation groups representatives of the Saudi Arabian television, Sandia, the Saudi Arabia Airlines, tourist and travel offices and journalists.

The minister briefed the delegation on Jordan's tourist attractions, archaeological sites and spa as well as summer resorts

and facilities offered to tourists. Discussions also covered facilities, customs offices and border posts offered to tourist groups visiting Jordan. They also discussed the prospect of holding tourist exhibitions to market Jordan's attractions in Saudi Arabia.

The minister Sunday also met with French Ambassador to Jordan Denis Bouchard and discussed French-Jordanian cooperation in tourism and archaeology. Kabariit thanked the French government for its help in archaeological excavations in the Kingdom.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An exhibition entitled "They chose 30 poets" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ An art exhibition by Irish artist Conal McIntyre at the British Council.



ARABIC FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

The Language Centre at the University of Jordan announces that the intensive course in Modern Standard Arabic for speakers of other languages will commence on Jan. 27, and will last for 16 weeks.

The programme is intensive and classes meet in the morning for 20 hours per week, Saturday-Wednesday. The fee for the course is JD 140. The evening course is non-intensive and classes meet six hours per week.

Those interested please call at the Language Centre for registration.

WANTED

A foreign economic institution wants to employ a Jordanian male with the qualification as follows:

1. University graduate
2. Minimum 4 year experience in the field of economic & commercial research as well as local administration
3. Excellent command of Arabic & English in writing and speaking

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59 Catering & Restaurant Management	17 Medical Office Admin.	
60 Accounting	18 Microcomputer Repair	
61 Business Management with option in Marketing	19 Hotel Restaurant Mgmt.	
62 Fashion Merchandising	20 Air Conditioning & Refrigeration	
63 Motor Vehicle Repair	21 Interior Decorating	
64 Surveying & Mapping	22 Fashion Merchandising	
65 Fitness & Nutrition	23 Motor Vehicle Repair	
66 Small Engine Repair	24 Surveying & Mapping	
67 Civil Engineering Tech.	25 Veterinary Assistant	
68 Mechanical Eng. Tech.	26 Digital Electronics Servicing	
69 Electrical Eng. Tech.	27 Building Trades	
	28 General Business	
	29 Practical English	

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Monday's Political Pulse

Peres must put his foot down

By Dr. Walid Sadi

RECENTLY Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres made a persuasive and poignant rebuttal to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir over the latter's decision to diminish Ezer Weizman's role in the cabinet for allegedly making contacts with the PLO. Peres reminded Shamir that it was he and his Likud partners that had torpedoed Jordan's role in the peace process two years ago and effectively removed it as a principal interlocutor. And now Shamir, Peres warned, wants to remove also the PLO from the peace process just as mischievously as he had done vis-a-vis Jordan in the past. That is why, Peres postulated, Shamir wants the PLO also out of the way in order to leave the Arab side with no real party to negotiate over the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and become an easier prey to Shamir's machiavellian designs.

But if that is the way Peres sees the situation, why on earth does he and his Labour Party keep on procrastinating over their chronic threats and innuendoes to part company with the Likud Party. Does he want to wait until there are no more peaceful options left on the negotiating table and the centrist position of the Palestinian side is undermined beyond repair and hope before he makes his move? True, the Labour Party fears national elections in Israel at this time, because the tide is moving against it

and prefers therefore not to rock the boat now. But wouldn't a decision now to precipitate a governmental crisis in Israel serve as the very catalyst that could galvanise the Israeli public opinion in the direction of reasonable accommodation with the Palestinian side and shake them up from their political slumber or lethargy? Is it outrageous and unreasonable to argue that by sharing power with the Likud the Labour Party is in effect consolidating the position of the Likud by helping it to dig deeper into the fabric of Israeli body politics? Alas, every time Peres and his colleagues had an ample opportunity and a just cause to rock the boat in Israel they opted to stay calm and collected and at the end many opportunities to break the deadlock and confusion within Israel was given yet another stay of execution.

If Peres and his party are sincere about waging peace and find a lot things wrong with Shamir's perspectives on peace with the Palestinians and the neighbouring Arab states, then now is the time to shake up Israel by precipitating a governmental crisis that would force the Israelis to make the kind of hard choices that they have been avoiding for much too long. The worse that could happen to Peres and his Labour Party if they withdraw from Shamir's government is to play second fiddle for the time being in

the Israeli political decision-making process. But that is exactly what they are doing anyway. At best they would have given peace between their people and the Arabs a real chance to get it off-centre.

Yes this is an invitation to Peres to put his foot down and carry out his pledge to negotiate peace with the Arab side on terms that reason and justice would tolerate. Otherwise the stalemate would drag on for ever and ever and the chances of peace in the Middle East would become the real and ultimate victim. Meanwhile the Arab side, the Palestinians included, must prepare the groundwork for the ultimate jettisoning of Shamir and his clique from the politics of the Middle East by playing their cards rationally and wisely. There is no doubt that the Arab parties have now a vested interest in supporting the voices of reason within Israel to get rid of extremism from their mainstream. If such a process requires synchronisation with the elements of moderation and fair play within Israel then be it. The people of the Middle East can no longer wait for miracles to descend on them from heaven or from Washington, or anywhere else for that matter, but instead must work together to bring down the forces of obstructionism and march forward to wage real peace on the basis of justice, equity and legitimacy.

Peaceful transitions

AT a time when the world is celebrating the demise of the Communist order in Eastern Europe and hailing the introduction of pluralism in its place, it is fair and proper to pause for a minute to pay a tribute to the socialist order for bringing about positive changes within the capitalist world. Lest mankind forgets, it was the threat of communism and the challenge of socialism that prompted the capitalist order to reform from the laissez faire stage to a market economy tinged with some elements of socialism in order to meet the pressing needs of poverty, unemployment, health insurance or education. Thus it is in order to recognise the great effects of socialism on capitalism at a time when mankind is burying with great fanfare the unadulterated form of communism.

Historians, political scientists and economists would probably attribute the end of communism to its inability to reform and adapt in the direction of capitalism as capitalism had successfully done in the direction of socialism. Had the communist order evolved and developed as capitalism had done, it would have probably converged with market economy systems somewhere half way and in the end survived the test of time. Instead it opted to remain stiff and uncompromising until the bitter end. Its fossilised concepts and inflexibility to adopt new and innovative ways to cope with new situations and conditions enslaved it with iron chains to worn-out and rigid guidelines. What ever possessed Communism to think that a socio-economic order which suited it decades ago can still serve it well in a completely new world is the question that will occupy the minds of historians for many generations.

And for how long its remnants can stay away from crumbling is open to conjecture. The last strongholds of communism can still save themselves from the inevitable if they begin to incorporate the seeds of change and evolution and start the long road towards contemporary ways of government and functional means to run their economies. This could be the safest and wisest route to their salvation and the surest way to avoid the kind of chaos and instability that usually ensue from and accompany abrupt changes in the political and economic order of any given country. The extent that these remaining bastions of pure and simple communism are willing to implement changes within their infrastructure will determine their capacity to survive the ordeals awaiting them. The dreadful experience of Romania must be avoided and evaded. It is therefore the hope and aspiration of all mankind that peaceful transitions in all forms of rigid rule can be given a chance to preempt more violent revolutions.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily discussed the 1990 fiscal budget which was presented to parliament Saturday and said that it is designed to help Jordan adapt to the economic reform programme which is bound to help stimulate the national economy and restore stability. But the paper said that the government needs to place controls on spending and eliminate any excesses beginning with government departments; and has to introduce steps that could help solve the problem of unemployment as demanded by parliament. What is also needed at the moment is a wide-scale campaign to spread awareness among members of the public for rationalisation in various fields and for curtailing unnecessary expenses as part of the general effort to reinvigorate the national economy, the paper noted. The budget manifested the high cost of living in Jordan and pointed to the fact that many Jordanians are finding it difficult to cope with soaring prices and to make both ends meet, said the paper. Therefore, it said, the deputies ought first to give a good example to the masses by adopting austerity measures to be applied first on themselves, and also to make serious efforts in their discussions to find means of alleviating the sufferings of a broad sector of the low-income groups among Jordanians.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily draws public attention to the fact that Iran and Israel the two enemies of the Arab nation might resort to aggression on Iraq to stem the growing Arab strength. Abdul Rahim Omar notes that Iran which has rejected Saddam Hussein's peace offer realises too well that it has no other alternative except to launch a desperate aggression on Iraq or to live peacefully with its Arab neighbour. The writer says that Iraq will no doubt continue to seek a permanent peace with Iran, and thanks to its military superiority, it will no doubt repel any aggression on Arab soil. The writer draws attention to Israel's aggressive policies towards the Arab nation and notes that Israeli rulers, using American weapons, might resort to another aggression on Iraq. But, he adds, this time the Iraqis will prove to the world that they can deal with any sort of aggression on its territory, as it continues to develop its technological skills and military arsenal which is feared by the enemies of the Arab nation. The writer says that Israel has always been maintaining its strategy on the basis that it must possess power equal to, or surpassing that of the whole strength of the Arab nation, but, he adds, Tel Aviv has now begun to realise that this state of affairs no more exists.

Al Dustour daily newspaper voiced optimism on the success of the national economic reform programme in the Kingdom. The paper said that the modest success so far achieved over a short period of time is sufficient to give us optimism, especially since success was achieved under very difficult conditions in the Kingdom. The paper said the Minister of Finance's statement on the fiscal budget outlining the government's orientation in the coming year, and the plans to rationalise public expenditure all point to a prospective future and an era marked with success in many fields. The paper referred in particular to the minister's statement that Jordan has already begun to overcome the serious challenges that faced the Kingdom in the past year, and has already gone some way towards stimulating the national economy by providing the essential foreign exchange and replenishing the treasury with foreign currency needed to finance essential imports for development.

By Yitzhak Oron

AMBIGUITY is in the nature of human affairs; new departures in international relations hold the potential of promise as well as of complications and danger. This is so as regards current events in Eastern Europe; and it is no less the case with the Syrian-Egyptian rapprochement, as it affects Arab-Israeli relations. Here, as always and everywhere, the difference in the realisation of potential will be made by the actors concerned.

Israel must reinvent itself continuously in its strategic environment. What need concern us most is that we ourselves are a major actor, that it is for us to contribute to the shaping of the future — decisively if possible. The real question for us is not what others but what we ourselves want and can do. As a famous American once wrote: If you want to know what the future holds, you have to go towards it.

As regards the peace process, what is promise for one Israeli is danger for another. Thus it must be said that promise means peace with security, even though Israel will have to pay for it with what is dear to all of us.

Basically, promise is inherent in the progress towards the fulfilment of Ben-Gurion's two prim-

ary conditions for a peace process: first, that the Arabs come to realise that Israel cannot be destroyed by main force and that, for their own good, they must settle the conflict peacefully; and second, that both the U.S. and USSR must want peace to be made.

That Damascus went to Cairo on Cairo's terms, pushed by Moscow's new Middle East policy of "no to war and yes to peace," means that such progress has taken place, though more on Russia's part than Syria's.

There is no opposite pole to Cairo, the leader of the Arab peace strategy. Thus both Cairo and its strategy have been strengthened. Mubarak may benefit internally as well — although the economic and fundamentalist threat won't go away.

As for the Syrians, while Former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's initiative remains a mistake for Assad, we should test the hypothesis that Syria's reconciliation with the Arab champion of peace may signify a certain positive change towards peace itself, and that, with the Syrian flag flying far from our ears in Cairo, Syria may become more accustomed to it in the future.

The major new obstacle to the peace process may arise from Damascus' ability to operate now

from within the Arab pragmatic camp. It will be in a much better position to insist that the Golan Heights be included in a comprehensive and simultaneously implemented settlement or, alternatively, to foil the peace process altogether. While in the past Cairo had no need to exert itself on behalf of Syria, it must now be expected to back Syria's demands, although it may try to mitigate them somewhat.

For Yasser Arafat and the PLO, new constraints on independent progress may arise, with or without reconciliation with Assad. The USSR will support Syria's demands, and the U.S. too will want a settlement of the Golan question. The international conference plan will gain more and more support.

Israel can legitimately pose three conditions; direct negotiations (even if these are held under international auspices), Syrian recognition of Israel, and full peace. Today Assad certainly seems unready to accept any of them.

For such conditions to be internationally accepted as serious and reasonable, we would have to indicate what we ourselves are ready, in principle, to concede.

Should the above scenario come to pass, it would mean that the step-by-step strategy that has

guided the whole peace process, from 1973-4 on, has come to an end or will at least encounter great obstacles. This strategy was conceived of as a progression from the relatively easy to the harder and the most problematic issues, while providing time for getting accustomed to the ideas of peace, confidence-building and trial periods.

Thus, Egypt was first, and Jordan and the Palestinians were to follow suit. Then, it was assumed, isolated Syria would either stay isolated or follow suit too. (Last, and least — Lebanon would follow in Syria's footsteps. The fiasco of our peace agreement with Lebanon proved that the common wisdom in this respect was genuine wisdom).

In any case, Jerusalem and the Golan were to come last. Now the whole process may telescope.

Should no progress be achieved, Syria may find itself in a position to make gradual gains for an inter-Arab strategy of confrontation, to be based on a Cairo-Damascus axis. This is also what the Egyptian left and a good part of the centre advocate. The objective would be to establish a more favourable political-military balance of power to enforce, in time, a settlement either by power-backed political means or, eventually, with the aid of armed

confrontation.

To be sure, various actors and issues can be expected to intervene in these scenarios in unforeseeable ways, among them inter-Arab divergencies and conflicts, including rifts between Cairo and Damascus, Iraq with its growing power, leadership changes, internal upheavals, economic constraints and incentives, events in the periphery of the area and in the world at large.

What influence these would have on our affairs will depend to a great extent on what we make of them in the framework of our own strategic aims. In any case, we will have to deal with the main issues. The major effort should still be directed at dealing with the Palestinian issue first and urgently. Doubtless we will have to concern ourselves with the Golan as well.

There is one lesson we have had plenty of opportunity to learn — and painfully. The status quo will not do; the conflict will not remain static. It will either be moved forward towards a political settlement or slide backwards toward confrontation, endangering our peace with Egypt too.

The potential new obstacles and dangers have arisen because we have refused to deal realistically with the Palestinian issue; we have conducted a status quo

strategy, a strategy of immobility. Because of it we have lost the advantages — the components of power — that a state is afforded by initiative and movement. Our immobility has led to two wars started by the other side, the Yom Kippur war and the intifada. The peace with Egypt was initiated by Sadat, while our own single try at a political move, by Shimon Peres, was foiled by his partners in the government.

The one big initiative we have taken since June 1967, when we began to wait for a phone call from the other side, was the Lebanon war. But it was out of touch with Middle East and world realities. The plan for elections in territories, as it stands in practice, amounts only to a tactical reaction to the intifada.

The longer we continue with immobility, with a reactive policy, the weaker we will grow strategically, our military might notwithstanding, and the more potential dangers we will encounter. The Syrian-Egyptian rapprochement calls for a national reappraisal, internal as well as external — The Jerusalem Post.

The writer, a commentator on Middle East affairs, is a former head of the Shiloah (now Dayin) Research Centre, and has served in the Israeli embassy in Cairo.

After loosing everything else can Noriega win legal war?

By Arthur Spiegelman
Reuters

NEW YORK — Here's a plan for Manuel Antonio Noriega to go free: Prove that your country was invaded, you were kidnapped, brought to a country where you are hated to be tried illegally on charges made by common criminals out to cut a deal.

Some U.S. lawyers think that under this interpretation of the Panamanian military leader's downfall, he may beat the rap — that is if he can find 12 jurors who have never heard of him, Panama or cocaine.

They say that if Noriega wins

his unprecedented legal battle, he will achieve in the law courts what he failed to do on the battlefield — triumph over the United States.

Even though these lawyers are in a decided minority, many legal experts say the case against Noriega is fraught with danger for President George Bush's government which invaded Panama on Dec. 20 to overthrow him and bring him to a U.S. court to be tried on drug trafficking charges.

Noriega is accused of letting the Medellin cocaine cartel use his country as a trans-shipment point for tons of cocaine en route to the United States and then

letting the cartel launder millions of dollars in profits in Panama banks.

The experts say the U.S. government will have to prove in the courts that Noriega was not grabbed illegally, that its evidence against him is not tainted and that, despite Bush calling him a "thug" and the U.S. Defence Department describing him as a "wily rat," he can receive a fair trial.

They also say that giving the former strongman "due process of law" is going to prove a long, hard process, especially when it comes to convincing the government to free classified documents about his dealings as an asset of the Central Intelligence Agency at \$200,000 a year.

Oddly enough, many experts say the government should have no problem with the argument that Noriega was kidnapped.

"Under U.S. law, even if you kidnap someone, as long as he is physically before the court, you can try him," said Sam Dash, counsel to the Senate Watergate hearings. "The position is: We don't care how he got there. I'm sure the defence will appeal but they'll lose all the way to the Supreme Court."

But the government may have a problem using the evidence it found against Noriega in his headquarters, including his records and ashes of cocaine, because of the constitution's prohibitions against illegal searches, says Colleen O'Connor, spokeswoman for the American Civil Liberties Union.

The government may also have trouble with their witnesses against Noriega — drug dealers who are testifying against him in the hopes of securing better deals for themselves.

One legal expert, Paul Kahn of Yale University, said that given all the problems in the case, he would not be surprised if the U.S. government made a deal with Noriega.

Another expert, who asked not to be identified, said, "the U.S. may rue the day when it brought this case."

William Kunstler, the dean of America's "radical" attorneys, goes a step further. He says the United States wanted to kill Noriega and having failed at that are now stuck with him and a mess of illegalities in trying him.

"This has never happened before in modern history — one country invades another to arrest its leader. Can you imagine the

Philippines army attacking Hawaii to get Marcos back or Iran invading New York to grab the shah. Can you imagine how we would have resisted that?" said Kunstler.

Kunstler added, "the army really went there to murder him and now the Bush administration is stuck. Can he get a fair trial? No. He may be the worst person in the world but the publicity has been so intense he can't get a fair trial."

But lawyers say fair juries were found for the trial of former White House aide Oliver North in the Iran-contra case and for the trial of David Hinckley, the man who tried to assassinate President Ronald Reagan in 1981.

Dash says he anticipates that one tricky issue will be the defence's demand for classified documents on Noriega's relationship with the CIA in the early 1980s on matters of military intelligence.

Washington's skeletons could come out at Noriega trial

By Deborah Zaharenko
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Manuel Antonio Noriega's drug trafficking trial could let some of President George Bush's political skeletons out of the cupboard and fill in details of U.S. support for the toppled Panamanian ruler during the Reagan years.

Noriega, now in jail in Miami awaiting trial on narcotics charges after surrendering in Panama Wednesday, for years enjoyed the enthusiastic backing of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Many details of U.S. support for Noriega are already public knowledge, revealed in probes of the Iran-contra scandal by Congress and in the trial last year of former White House aide Oliver North.

"The administration has done a damage assessment and has decided that (Noriega's trial testimony) won't be any more embarrassing than what has already come out in the Iran-contra scandal," said John Dinges, a Latin America analyst and author of a book on Noriega called Our Man in Panama.

Dinges told Reuters Noriega will be hard-pressed to bring up incidents at the trial that could hurt Bush and other U.S. officials.

"Noriega has to show relevance (in bringing such incidents into evidence)," Dinges said. "He can't just say, 'I was a CIA agent and everything I did was for the CIA.'"

But Noriega's trial could refresh the public memory about how close Panama's self-styled "maximum leader" was to the



Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega

seat of power in Washington.

He met at least twice with George Bush, once for a Washington lunch in 1976 when the two men headed their nations' respective intelligence agencies, and then in 1983 in Panama when Bush was vice president under Ronald Reagan.

He reportedly had a close personal relationship with CIA chief William Casey during Reagan's tenure. According to a Senate report, Casey winked at mounting evidence of Noriega's involvement with the Colombian cocaine trade in 1985 because Noriega "was providing valuable support for our policies in Central America, especially Nicaragua."

He regularly received letters of commendation from top drug enforcement officials, including DEA Director John Lawn, who

wrote to Noriega in May 1986, "I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my deep appreciation for the vigorous anti-drug policy that you have adopted." A Senate report said Noriega later shared DEA intelligence with drug traffickers.

He once offered to assassinate the entire Sandinista leadership in Nicaragua in exchange for U.S. help in shoring up his public image, according to a government summary of events released at North's trial. The summary said North declined Noriega's offer, but said the Panamanian could blow up certain Nicaraguan targets.

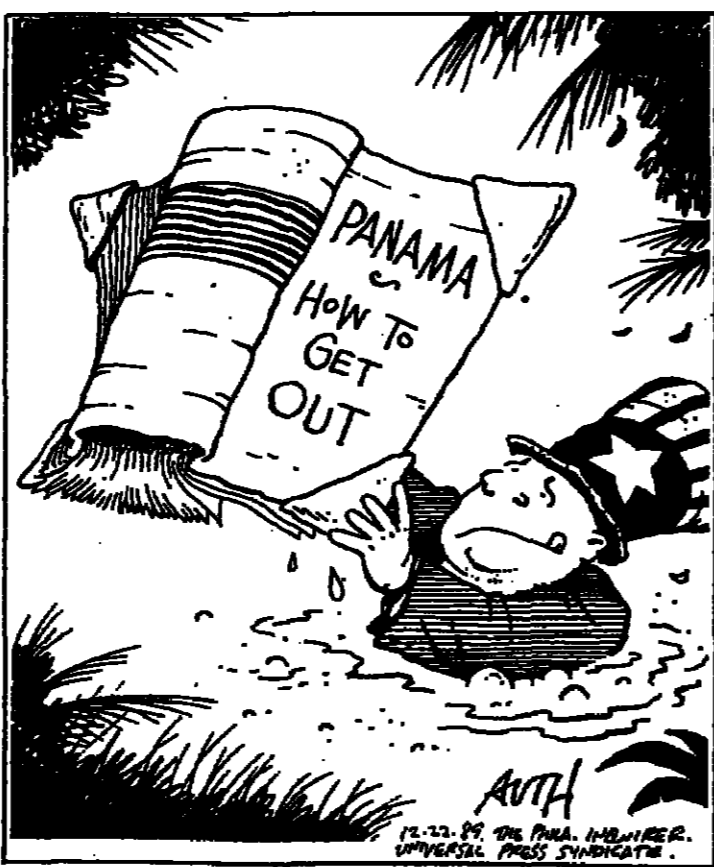
Noriega's lawyer, Steven Kolkin, predicted in a televised interview that media coverage of the invasion and Noriega's surrender made it nearly impossible to seat an impartial jury.

But William Bennett, who heads Bush's Office of National Drug Control Policy, said the publicity would guarantee fairness, saying, "there will be a lot of light on it."

"This tyrant has lost his power. He's a man without a country. Reality is sinking in."

Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov said in an interview on Cable News Network television, "We don't care about his trial. We care about the international law."

He added that in-depth analysis "shows that it is not the general but the Panama Canal which is the main thing here. President Reagan was dead-end against giving the canal back to Panama. He criticised President (Jimmy) Carter, saying that Uncle Sam put his tail between the legs and was afraid to bark ... and now you are barking."



A country on the mend

By Jerome Kechile

This is the second in a two-part series on Namibia

OSHAKATI, Namibia — Sitting on his hospital bed in Oshakati, a small town in northern Namibia, his torso and left arm in a cast, 28-year-old Likies Shikango Uzambala tells of the 10 years he spent as a guerrilla fighter in the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), the military branch of the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO).

"On April 6 this year, I was in the Ondangwa region with seven other fighters of the PLAN. I got hit by shrapnel from a mortar rocket fired by the South African army. I was hit in the left arm, the bones were shattered, but thank God, I was alive," he recalls. Alive, but barely. He lost a lot of blood while two of his companions transported him to Ondangwa hospital, where he claims treatment was inadequate. In May, he was transferred to Oshakati in a Swiss medical unit operating with the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), the U.N. body in charge of overseeing Namibia's accession to independence. Uzambala underwent several operations and hopes his ordeal will soon be over.

He was part of an operation

launched on April 1 by SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma. Defying a U.N. peace agreement he previously had agreed to, Nujoma ordered about 1,200 guerrilla fighters to leave their camps in Angola to move into Ovamboland, just one day before the Blue Berets of the U.N. peacekeeping forces were due to arrive in Namibia.

Interviewed shortly before, Nujoma had said that Namibia's independence was finally on the horizon, after a century of bitter fighting. But SWAPO's decision to move in almost killed the peace accord as it prompted UNTAG to allow South Africa's troops back into action. The operation was a disaster for SWAPO: losses were estimated at 300 men killed and hundreds more wounded.

Behind his dark glasses, Uzambala persists in saying it was worth it. "Since the war broke out 23 years ago, there hasn't been a real border between Angola and Namibia," he explains. "As fighters in the PLAN, we used to come and go as we pleased, depending on our orders... As a matter of fact, I am of the Ovambo tribe so I spent most of my time as a guerrilla fighter in Ovamboland. I would go into Angola either because the Koevoet (South African troops) pushed us back, or to take time off, in Luanda or Lobito."

Also an Ovambo, Nujoma has the support of most of his people who number about 650,000 out of a population of 1.3 million. In the November independence election SWAPO scored 92 per cent of the votes in the Ovamboland district.

SWAPO's April offensive was strongly criticised by Anton Lubowski, the only white member of SWAPO's Central Committee who was assassinated last September in Windhoek in circumstances that remain unclear. "This invasion was a serious mistake," he was quoted as saying. "Looking back on it, it never should have happened."

The operation was the last in a long series. Since 1976-77 when the fighting intensified, the war has killed at least 1,000 people a year. Comments Uzambala gleefully: "I don't know how many people I have killed. In the bush, all you hear is cries and whispers. I used to pray to God every day for help."

Fighting in the PLAN is a tradition in Uzambala's family. In 1966, during the first confrontation between SWAPO and the South African police forces in Ovamboland, his father was among the rebels. In neighbouring Angola, the establishment in 1975 of a Marxist regime backed by Cuban soldiers and the Soviet Union allowed SWAPO to become entrenched and build camps on the Angolan side of the

border.

Four years after that, while he was still a pupil at a secondary school in Zambia, Uzambala decided to follow in the footsteps of his father and two of his brothers.

"What prompted me to join the PLAN was my desire to fight and free Namibia of the foreign domination it had suffered for dozens of years," he explains. "The South African regime took our land, harassed our people and exploited our resources."

Uzambala is an enthusiastic SWAPO follower. The walls of the hospital room he shares with two other wounded fighters are covered with Nujoma portraits and SWAPO pamphlets. "For me, Nujoma is the father of Namibian independence. He is the breath, the soul of our struggle and if he were to order me to take up arms again, I wouldn't hesitate for a minute. I am a fighter, I am used to living in the bush," he says proudly. When some of his PLAN friends come and visit him, their card-playing is often interrupted by triumphant fist punching the air.

Despite his wounds he was able to have a say in the recent election: UNTAG and Pretoria's representative, General Administrator Louis Pienaar, had made special arrangements for invalids and bed-ridden people who were visited by officials taking their vote. Says Uzambala as he looks to the

future: "When I get out of here, I hope to find a job fast. But I have no special skills, I only know how to fight." Like a majority of

Namibians, Uzambala can barely read or write. He and his country

are at the threshold of a new life.

— World News Link.

At 28, Likies Shikango Uzambala knows only how to fight. He hopes that Namibia's independence will give him a chance for a better life and a job.



At 28, Likies Shikango Uzambala knows only how to fight. He hopes that Namibia's independence will give him a chance for a better life and a job.



Embarked on a 2200-mile trek across the South Pole, the coldest territory on earth, Reinhold Messner and Arved Fuchs hope to draw attention to the necessity of safeguarding this wilderness.

Saving the antarctic

By Clare Pedrick

ROME — Nearly 80 years after Roald Amundsen planted the Norwegian flag at the South Pole, an Italian and a German plan to be the first men to cross the Antarctic from coast to coast on foot.

Reinhold Messner, one of the world's top mountaineers, and Arved Fuchs, a specialist in polar expeditions, recently started their trek of 3,500 kilometers entirely alone, across the coldest expanse of territory on this planet. The two explorers decided to make the crossing without the help of huskies, the heavy-coated dogs that are traditionally used in arctic land travel, and without an airplane to monitor their progress. The idea, says the 45-year-old Messner, is to push human endurance to the limit and to draw attention to the importance of preserving the Antarctic as the world's last real wilderness.

"If you use motorised sleds, heated cabins, airplanes and other technological gadgets, all you are doing is creating the very deceptive impression that the Antarctic is a place that can be conquered," he said. "Our idea is not to find out which is the most convenient method of transport but to understand the largest desert of ice on this earth in all its complexities and with all the risks that result from the fact that we are tackling it with nothing more than human resources."

In choosing the Antarctic, Messner and Fuchs, both energetic campaigners for the environment, hope to gain public support for the idea of turning the area into a giant national park. The Antarctic Treaty, a pact signed by 20 nations that bans the use of the area for nuclear testing and radioactive waste disposal and mandates the protection of living resources, will expire in 1991. Many environmentalists fear that without treaty protection the Antarctic will be vulnerable to commercial exploitation.

The Messner-Fuchs expedition was set to begin at Beccles Island, in the northwestern Antarctic. The two men flew there from Chile. Their goal was McMurdo Sound, at the south of a continent that is almost as large as the

United States and Australia combined, and they hoped to reach the South Pole in time for Christmas. After that, it will be a race against time to finish the trek before the savage Antarctic winter sets in at the end of February.

Even in summer the Antarctic is known as one of the most hostile territories on earth, a desolate wasteland of ice where the temperature often drops below minus 35 degrees centigrade and where blizzards and intense freezing winds can last for weeks at a time. In winter, temperatures of minus 80 degrees centigrade are not unusual.

Messner, who was born in the

mountainous Dolomite region of northern Italy, admitted to being scared by the challenge. "Thinking of this next adventure I have the same worries and terrible fear that I had as a young boy when I made my first climb up the Dolomites," he said. "For me, this journey means conquering other areas of myself, which so far have not been put to the test."

Lean, bearded and with the strong accent of one who grew up near the border with Austria, Messner is best known as a mountaineer, famous as the only man ever to climb all 14 of the world's highest mountains without oxygen supplies. During a career

that spans 25 years he has scaled peaks from Mount Everest to Kilimanjaro. Between expeditions he lives with his companion, Sabine, and their 2-year-old daughter in a castle perched, appropriately enough, on the side of a mountain in Italy's Alto Adige region. This latest adventure represents a new departure. "It seemed that mountains had last five secrets to unfold. I've solved all the problems there are to be solved when it comes to mountaineering," he said.

Four years passed after Messner first had the idea of the Antarctic trek. Two years ago, as a kind of trial run, he walked

2,000 kilometers from one side of Tibet to the other, crossing through forests and climbing the peaks that stood in his path. But the Antarctic expedition has posed special problems: finding sponsors to underwrite expenses totalling nearly \$750,000 and, almost as difficult, finding the right person to share four months of what are bound to be very stressful conditions.

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq's financial problems should ease in the coming decade and the government will be able to speed up paying off the huge foreign debt it ran up during the eight-year war with Iran, Acting Finance Minister Mohammad Mehdi Sakeh said Sunday.

Stable oil prices, currently pegged at around \$18 a barrel, will ensure revenues estimated at \$15 billion this year. Iraq's current OPEC quota is 3.14 million bar-

Bahrain sees slow, steady development

"We will not see growth like we did during the 1970s boom but we are talking about slow but steady growth."

AMMAN EXCH

CHANGE RATES

and imports from the West at \$11.7 billion. In trade with fellow members of Comecon, a grouping of socialist countries dominated by the East Bloc, East Germany enjoyed a surplus in 1989 equivalent to three or four billion Deutschmarks (\$1.7 to \$2.4 billion), she said. Luft said that, while the East German government would encourage foreign participation, it was determined to maintain a dominant role for public ownership in the country's economy.



But economists say it has stung the financial system.

"Credit has all but dried up," said Enrique Szewach, chief economist at the Latin American

Bond Corp director Peter Lucas, surprised by the move. "The action of the surprise and is not in our judgment understanding of the position of

and until Jan. 31.

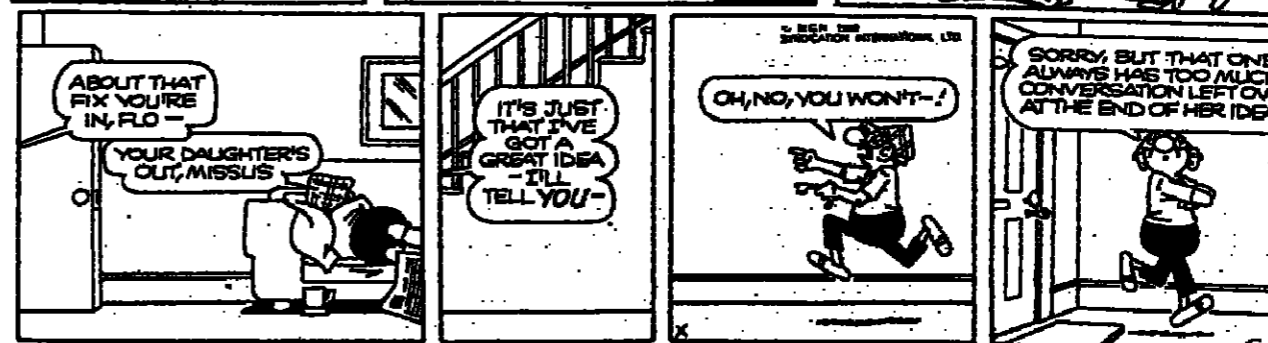
"Bond Corp is not discouraged and hopes to persuade them at a meeting to come as a deterrent of our (Bond Corp)," he said.

dismissed as chairman of Israel Chemicals (ICL), largely over his opposition to the sale of the

The Economic Daily News said many Taiwanese companies, in order to evade taxes and avoid red tape, invested overseas without approval from the Investment

BRUNG!

	Buy	Sell	French franc	112.8	113.9
U.S. dollar	649.0	655.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	449.1	453.6
Pound Sterling	1060.4	1071.0	Dutch guilder	339.9	343.3
Deutschmark	383.8	387.6	Swedish crown	105.7	106.8
Swiss franc	419.9	424.1	Italian lira (for 100)	51.1	51.6
			Belgian franc (for 10)	184.1	185.9



Sanchez beats Reneberg

WELLINGTON (R) — Top seeded Spanish tennis player Sanchez won the New Zealand national tennis title on Sunday but only after a five-set marathon against American Richey Reneberg, playing in his first grand prix final.

Sanchez, the world number 17, has struggled with his form all week and made heavy weather of dispatching Reneberg 6-7, 6-4, 4-6, 6-1 in 3½ hours.

In the end the experience of Sanchez, who has played 17 grand prix finals, paid off as the match became an endurance test. "I don't think I played the big points too well. Maybe if I'd won a couple more, I'd have won the match," said eighth-seeded Reneberg.

"Maybe I was a little tired at the end. It's tough to play a match that long — it's tough to keep the concentration going," Sanchez reacted to a 4-0 lead in

the first set but the American staged a remarkable comeback, breaking Sanchez in the sixth and eighth games to take the set in a tiebreak.

The Spaniard said he had felt the pressure, despite being 41 places higher than Reneberg in the world rankings. "I started really fast and it was going well for me, too well for my thinking, and when he started to play better I felt the nerves."

After much seagazing Sanchez capitalised on Reneberg's serving problems in the deciding set. "I think he got a little down, a little negative, and I was able to take the set," he said.

Although he rated his victory last week in the Hopman Cup with his sister Arantxa slightly higher, Sanchez said his triumph in the \$150,000 Wellington tournament would give him confidence for the Australian Open later this month.

Spanish soccer:

Real crushes Atletico

MADRID (R) — Spanish league champions Real Madrid crushed Atletico Madrid 3-1 on Saturday night in a game riddled with yellow cards.

Referee Jose Enriquez, a neutral Catalan, handed out 12 yellow cards, eight for Real, and a red to Argentine World Cup back Oscar Ruggeri in the 83rd minute.

Real scored two goals in the first seven minutes and dominated the first half, imposing their rhythm and confusing Atletico, who had not lost for eight games.

After halftime, Atletico improved but Real soon held sway again with their better tactics and technique.

Real international midfielder Martin Vazquez scored the first two goals, first with a powerful kick in the second minute and

then taking advantage of a mistake by Atletico goalkeeper Agustin Elduayen, who dropped a ball he should have held in the seventh minute.

In the 49th minute Eugenio Bustorini scored for Atletico with a direct free kick.

Real reasserted themselves and West German midfielder Bernd Schuster dribbled through Atletico's defence and beat Elduayen in the 75th minute.

The game in Real's Santiago Bernabeu Stadium started with a ceremony for Alfredo Di Stefano, who played with Real in the 1950 and 60s. Di Stefano, who was awarded the club's greatest honour, the 'laureada', will become the club's technical assistant next week.

Italian soccer:

Late Napoli goal means no change at top

By Jen Newton.

ROME (R) — A late header by Andrea Carnevale from a Diego Maradona free kick earned league leaders Napoli a 1-0 home victory against lowly Ascoli Sunday, leaving the top of Italian soccer's first division virtually unchanged.

Title contenders AC Milan and Roma blitzed three goals past Cesena and Udinese respectively and Internazionale retained second place with a fine 1-0 away win against Cremonese.

Napoli, who in their last league game of 1989 suffered their first defeat this season away to Lazio, started sluggishly against second-placed Ascoli and suffered a setback in the 38th minute when midfielder Luca Fusi left the field injured. He was replaced by Massimo Mauro.

But Napoli, whose much-criticised defence was bolstered by the return of Alessandro Renica, absent through injury for nearly four months, finally got the goal which had eluded them, thanks to Argentinian captain Maradona.

His 72nd minute free kick from the edge of the penalty area was fought precisely for Carnevale to score with a powerful header.

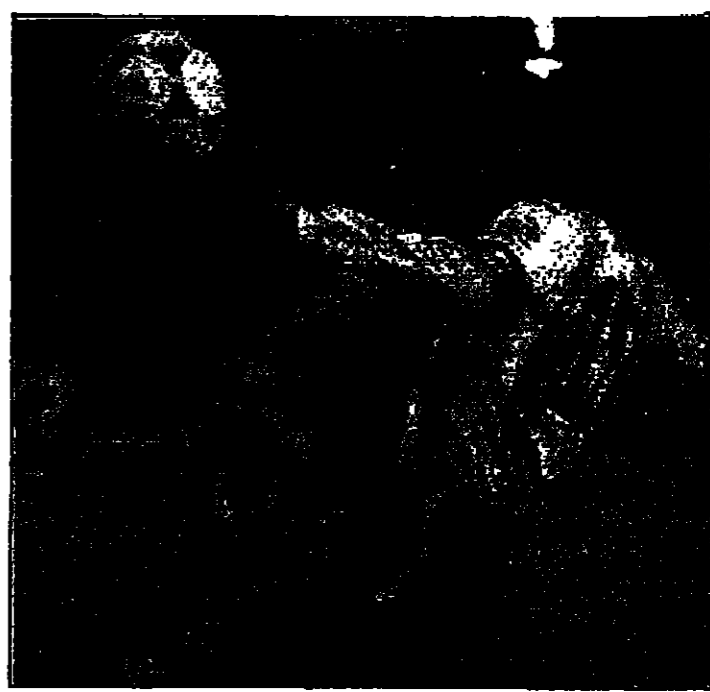
Earlier, Napoli fullback Ciro Ferrara came close when a long range shot was barely kept out by Ascoli keeper Fabrizio Lorieri.

Italy international Roberto Donadoni gave world club champions AC Milan an early lead in their 3-0 hammering of Cesena when he put a low shot from 18 metres (yards) past keeper Sebastiano Rossi in the 10th minute.

Defender Mauro Tassotti made it two shortly after the restart and footballer of the year Marco van Basten scored the third with a spot kick after being brought down inside the area.

The Dutch international striker's penalty brings his season's league tally to seven, level with German international Rudi Voeller of Roma who scored with perhaps the luckiest penalty of the day in his side's 3-1 home win against Udinese.

Referee Luciano Luci pointed to the spot after Roma's Ruggerio Rizzitelli was felled by



Diego Maradona

keeper Beniamino Abate. Voeller hit his spot kick too close to abate and was fortunate when the ball rebounded near enough for him to put it away at the second attempt.

F.A. Cup day:

Glory for some, misery for others

By Rex Gowar

LONDON (R) — First division players walked off with their heads bowed while virtual unknowns basked in unexpected glory after Saturday's third round of the English Football Association (F.A.) Cup.

Coventry, one of the classier sides, were blasted by manager John Silet after being bundled out by lowly opposition for the second successive year.

"There are no excuses whatsoever. We were playing the ball square and backwards all the time. It was a complete disaster," Silet said after the shock 1-0 defeat at third division Northampton.

Coventry, winners in 1987, fell at the same stage last year to minor league Sutton United.

Silet was particularly angry because his players had made him eat his pre-match words. He had said: "that 2-1 defeat at Sutton was our inoculation against it happening again."

Steve Berry, whose 42nd-minute goal sank Coventry, said: "I have had some good times in football with my previous clubs but this must beat them all."

League leaders and cup holders Liverpool must replay with Swansea on Tuesday, in no small measure because of a young goalkeeper who has been none too popular at the third division club.

Lee Bracey made several good saves, particularly from internationals Ian Rush, Steve Nicol and Steve McMahon to keep the score 0-0.

Manager Ian Evans said: "Lee needs a pat on the back. He's taken some flack from all quarters, including myself."

Nineteen-year-old substitute Paul Hiron of fourth division Torquay scored with his first touch of the ball to send three-times winners West Ham of the second division crashing 1-0.

He later said he was scared to even touch the ball for fear of making a mistake. "I was a bit nervous because the lads were doing well and a slight mistake

could have put them out."

Linden Jones had a nightmare start for third division Reading as his error allowed Sunderland to take the lead. But his two second half goals sank the second division side, triumphant in 1973 through a goal by current reading coach Ian Porterfield.

Minor league Darlington earned a replay at home to fourth division Cambridge but Whiteley Bay fell to Rochdale, also of the fourth division.

First division Wimbledon, 1988 winners, lost 2-0 at West Bromwich Albion. Goals by Gary Robson and Kevin Bartlett gave the second division side their first win in the competition for six years.

Luton, one from bottom of the first division, crashed 4-1 at Brighton, who won at home for the first time in three months.

Other first division sides were glad to secure replays after being pressed all the way.

Exeter manager Terry Cooper said he felt mixed emotions after the fourth division leaders drew 1-1 at home to Norwich. Darlan

Rowbotham put Exeter ahead five minutes from time but Norwich were level again within 30 seconds through Robert Fleck.

Chelsea also drew 1-1 at home to third division Crewe thanks to a late goal by defender Steve Clarke.

Blackburn drew 2-2 with Aston Villa in a tie loaded with history. The second division side, who won the cup six times in the first half of the century equalised twice against in-form first division Villa, record seven times winners.

Four first division teams were happy after making the fourth round in one attempt.

Exeter manager Terry Cooper said he felt mixed emotions after the fourth division leaders drew 1-1 at home to Norwich. Darlan

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GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SAHAB
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GRASP THE BRASS RING

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A K J 10 6
♥ K 10 9
♦ 8
♣ 2 7 7 3

EAST
♠ 5 3
♥ A Q J 5
♦ K 7 6 5
♣ A Q 10 9 4

SOUTH
♠ Q 9
♥ 8 7 2
♦ 5 2
♣ A K Q 10 8 5

The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♣ 3 ♠ 4 ♠
5 ♠ 6 ♠ 7 ♠ 8 ♠

Opening lead: Six of O.

If there is anything we fear more than a person who proudly claims to "play by the seat of the pants," it is one who claims to go "by the book." The first is likely to be a player with more imagination than is healthy; the latter, one with no imagination at all.

The auction is reported as it occurred, and it does not find favor with this department. We would not consider anything other than a take-out double with the East hand.

West's four-diamond preempt was a rather half-hearted attempt to crowd the auction. It was unlikely to succeed because the opponents had already exchanged a considerable amount of information. Had we been in the West seat, we would have gone the limit by raising to five diamonds. East passed because he had hopes of defeating the contract.

West led his fourth-best diamond. East won and, with the threat of the spade suit coming his in the face, cashed the ace of hearts before trying to take a second diamond. Making five-odd—a "book" result, since West had made the textbook opening lead of fourth-best in her partner's suit.

However, a rather more imaginative defense would have defeated the contract. With five-odd support for partner's suit, West should have realized that two rounds of diamonds were not going to live—indeed, even the first diamond might not survive. It might be vital for West to direct the defense, but she had no entry.

The solution would have been to lead the king of diamonds at the opening p.m. Then the heart shift at trick two would have been obvious, and by-bye contract.

THE Daily Crossword by Donald B. Goren

ACROSS

- 1 Across sound
- 2 Like a cucumber
- 3 Graph dips
- 4 Ancient chest
- 5 Rusa, range
- 6 Force
- 7 Food item
- 8 Arranged in three
- 9 Honors
- 10 Deceit
- 11 Ancient
- 12 Olympic site
- 13 Draft letters
- 14 Food item
- 15 Hyson for one
- 16 Sniggle's catch
- 17 Sing
- 18 Tapestry
- 19 Football position
- 20 Sinus cavities
- 21 Gene Kelly sang in it
- 22 Eur. nation
- 23 Have lunch
- 24 Food item
- 25 Hwy.
- 26 Rhine tributary
- 27 Airline for Tel.
- 28 Yo — Shoppe
- 29 Painter heard
- 30 Gen
- 31 Food item
- 32 French locale
- 33 America
- 34 Theater seat
- 35 Improve a text
- 36 Trap
- 37 Slaughter
- 38 — mundi

DOWN

- 1 Badger
- 2 — ricky
- 3 Manager of a band
- 4 Hammer parts
- 5 Bistro
- 6 Hockey ace
- 7 Peacock
- 8 feather eyes
- 9 Island
- 10 "Conan"
- 11 Yo — Shoppe
- 12 Keen
- 13 Tastes wine
- 14 What time does
- 15 Hans's son
- 16 Writer or setter
- 17 Trap
- 18 Holds the spotlight
- 19 Ice pinnacle
- 20 Pub item
- 21 Enter a track meet
- 22 Swiss resort
- 23 Gem weight
- 24 Happily
- 25 Syn.'s opposite
- 26 Two-tone
- 27 Olympic contender
- 28 Pipe part
- 29 Singer Johnny
- 30 Color
- 31 Words of understanding
- 32 Fr. native
- 33 Ship
- 34 A Redgrave
- 35 Offend
- 36 Dummy
- 37 Concert

Yesterday's Puzzle Solvers:

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 - 3- Head Of Research (Pharmacology)
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Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema

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Rock Moranis... In

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Cinema

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Liberian refugees report troops attacking civilians

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — Liberian refugees have poured into neighbouring Ivory Coast to escape fighting in a border area and claim soldiers have shot and killed an unknown number of civilians, a report said Sunday.

The report broadcast by the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) came as refugees fleeing the region told other reporters that Liberian troops were killing civilians indiscriminately.

The claims could not be independently verified. Diplomats have said it is difficult to determine the number of Liberians fleeing hostilities in the region, 120 kilometres north east of Monrovia, but some reported the figure as high as 8,000 to 10,000.

Fighting erupted two weeks ago when, according to Liberia, about 100 rebels led by dissident Charles Taylor crossed into Ivory Coast with the intent of toppling President Samuel Doe. Doe, who seized power in a bloody 1980 coup, told thousands gathered Saturday at a rally in Monrovia that Liberian forces were engaged in a huge search of the area to flush out any remaining rebels.

He also warned citizens to inform on the rebels whereabouts "because if we catch them in your home, we will treat you as a rebel. Therefore, furnish us with information if you want to be on the safe side."

Liberia has said the rebels, who call themselves the National Patriotic Front, had killed more than 200 people, but that only a few dissidents remained on the run, "sporadically attacking civilians in the forest areas of Nimba."

Doe said troops were bringing the situation under control and that a dusk-to-dawn curfew has been clamped on the sparsely populated region. Brig.-Gen. Edward Smith, the army commander in charge of the embattled Nimba county, revealed the civilian casualties Friday when Doe visited the region. The radio quoted Smith as saying that in one border town alone seven people had been shot and killed as they were praying in a mosque. He said only

one Liberian soldier was killed in the fighting.

Smith also produced three identity cards he said were taken from suspected rebels identified only as Ivorian nationals.

Liberia repeatedly has accused Ivory Coast of harbouring Doe's opponents, a charge the Ivorians deny. Ivory Coast President Felix Houphouët-Boigny reportedly sent a high-level delegation to Danane, the Ivorian border village where the dissidents are said to have crossed into Liberia.

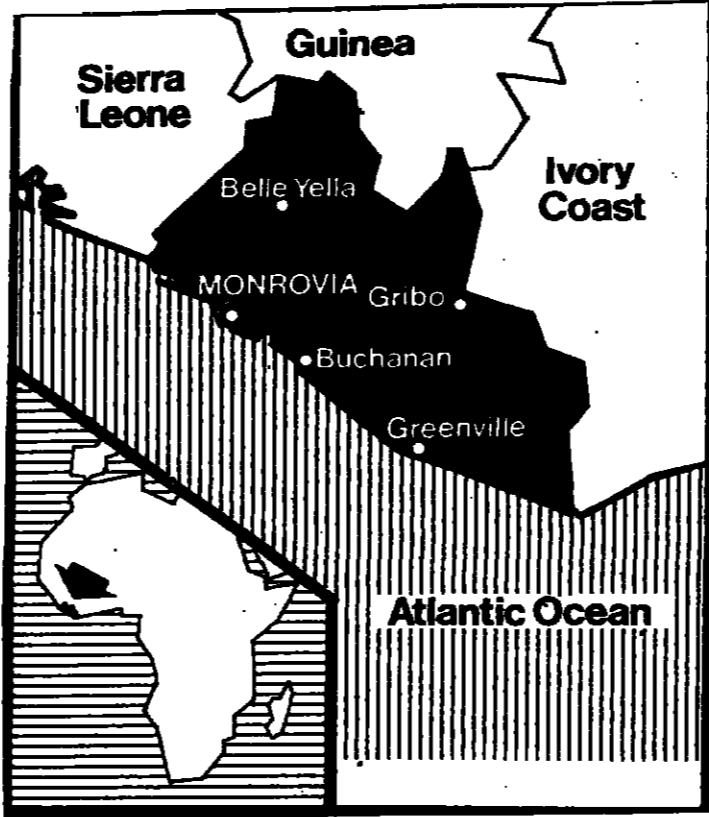
Liberia also has claimed the rebels were trained in Libya and Burkina Faso, Burkina Faso has denied the charge.

The dissidents are reportedly led by Taylor, the director-general of Liberia's General Services Agency from 1980-83.

His forces appear to have no connection with Liberia's opposition parties, the largest of which, the United People's Party, has condemned the invaders for using unconstitutional methods against the government.

Doe, a former sergeant major, seized power in an April 1980 coup in which President William Tolbert and most of his political allies were killed.

Liberia was founded by freed American slaves in 1847.



Aquino orders seizure of all private airfields

MANILA (Agencies) — President Corason Aquino, wary of another coup attempt, has ordered the takeover of all private airstrips in the Philippines and the seizure of private aircraft used by army mutineers in last December's military putsch.

Aquino, in a signed copy of her directive obtained by Reuters Sunday, ordered an investigation of the aircraft's owners and pilots and the suspension of their operations pending an inquiry into their alleged role in the failed coup.

The government air transportation office will temporarily be placed in charge of all private airstrips.

Aquino signed the order on Dec. 27 in line with emergency powers given her by the Congress to help thwart further coup attempts. She has survived six army mutinies since taking power in a popular revolt in February 1986.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer newspaper said most of the country's 128 registered private airfields were owned by multinational companies and former business associates of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Some of the rebel army officers who nearly toppled Aquino in the Dec. 1-7 coup bid were former allies of Marcos, toppled by Aquino in the 1986 revolt.

Aquino issued the order to prevent "the use of these facilities and aircraft in the furtherance of mutiny and rebellion," the directive said.

Defence officials have accused opposition politicians, businessmen and foreigners of giving financial and other support to the rebellion.

Transportation Secretary Oscar Orbes said in an interview his office lacked the men to police all the private airstrips in the Philippines and will ask the Defence Department to help out by assigning soldiers to the job.

Soviets pledge to open border with Romania

BUCHAREST (AP) — Moving to improve Soviet-Romanian ties, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has pledged to open the border between the two countries and reaffirmed the Kremlin's offer to provide oil and gas to help Romania through the winter.

At the same time, Romania's interim leadership is taking steps toward greater democracy, announcing that it would adhere to an international human rights agreement and offering to give fledgling opposition parties access to the media before holding free elections.

After more than five hours of talks with Romanian leaders Saturday, Shevardnadze said the two countries would begin negotiations in the near future on opening the border to allow people on both sides to make contact "without any difficulties whatsoever."

Shevardnadze's visit appeared to mark a turning point in Soviet-Romanian relations, which had been frosty in the past, first because ousted leader Nicolae Ceausescu pursued maverick foreign and economic policies and later because he rejected any reforms. Since Ceausescu was toppled in a popular revolt on Dec. 22 and executed three days later, the

Actor escapes plane fire

LOS ANGELES (R) — A plane piloted by actor James Brodin burst into flames when taking off Friday, but he narrowly escaped injury, police said.

Brodin, 49, who played Dr. Steve Kiley in 180 episodes of the television series *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, was also in the *Hotel* series, was taking off in his Cessna 182 from an airfield on the northern outskirts of Los Angeles when a gust of wind hurled the plane down an embankment, police said. The \$25,000 aircraft was engulfed in flames and destroyed, but Brodin survived, a spokesman said. Brodin starred in the film *The Amityville Horror* and portrayed Clark Gable in *Gable and Lombardo*.

'Die Hard II' endorses terrorism

DENVER (AP) — Airline officials are angry that portions of *Die Hard II*, which will be shot at Stapleton International Airport, endorsing the film "is an endorsement of terrorism."

"It involves terrorism, violence against airports, destruction of an aircraft and crash," Jack Ekey, general manager of United Airlines' Denver operations, said. "As a matter of principle, we don't believe that kind of thing represents either airports or airlines in a way which we see ourselves or want the public to see us."

Twentieth Century-Fox plans to start shooting the film at Stapleton on Jan. 15. Representatives of all airlines that use Stapleton lodged a complaint last week with airport officials. Greg Lazzaro, location manager of the film, said the airlines' position is "total, unadulterated bull" and "preposterous and stupid." Ekey said the film script, which has not been shown to the airlines, is the story of a police officer's battle against terrorists who try to take over Dulles International Airport in suburban Washington. The plot for the sequel to *Die Hard* is heavy on wisecracks and liberal use of automatic weapons and plastic explosives in the abuse of private property, he said. "To say it's an endorsement of terrorism is unfair," Ekey said. "It's not a movie about airlines. It's a movie about a New York cop who's in a cartoon."

Monkey's execution stayed

NEW DELHI (AP) — A judge in southern India stayed the execution of a monkey in response to pleas from animal lovers, a newspaper has reported. The monkey, which is in police custody in the port city of Travancore, was to have been killed Friday on an order issued by a local magistrate, the Hindu newspaper said.

Animal lovers filed a petition pleading that the monkey be spared and suggesting that it be banished to a wildlife sanctuary, the Madras-based newspaper said. The Travancore Sessions Court issued a stay of execution until Jan. 11 when a hearing will be conducted, the Hindu said. The newspaper did not say why or when the monkey was captured, referring to it only as a "naughty monkey" who "fell into a police trap." Indian newspapers frequently report monkeys terrorizing school children, snatching their lunch boxes and even raiding homes in search for food. Monkeys are a common sight in India. Many Hindus do not hurt them because they evoke images of the monkey-god Hanuman and his band of monkey warriors who defeated a demon king in Hindu mythology.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Polish Communists to dissolve party

WARSAW (R) — Poland's Communist Party leader have given the green light to its dissolution and replacement by a non-Marxist party at a special congress this month. The 230-member Central Committee, at its last formal meeting, approved the agenda for a congress that will disband the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) on Jan. 27 and form a socialist party tailored to the new East European democracy. The decision to disband the party follows its crushing defeat by Solidarity in parliamentary elections last June and its handover of power to a Solidarity-led government in September. In a resolution passed at a day-long meeting, the Central Committee turned over to the 1,637 congress delegates the agenda, draft statutes for the new party, a list of possible names for it and a strongly-worded programme distancing it from the Stalinist heritage of the PUWP. The Central Committee, anxious to avert a last-minute split between hardliners and reformers that could weaken the new party, did not adopt the documents but simply voted to pass them over to the delegates for discussion at the congress. Party chief Mieczyslaw Rakowski, a contender for the leadership of the new party, expressed relief that the party had held together. He said the new party's goal would be to gather together the entire Polish left. There was no danger that it would be dominated by PUWP apparatchiks, or officials, Rakowski said.

Brunei frees 6 political detainees

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — The Sultanate of Brunei has released six political detainees held under its internal security act since an abortive revolt 27 years ago which was suppressed by British-led Gurkha troops. Ruler and Prime Minister Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah agreed to release the six, according to a statement from Brunei's state-run broadcasting division. "Before their release, the detainees renewed their pledge of loyalty to His Majesty and the Brunei government and to uphold the laws of Brunei," said the statement.

Bomb explodes near Indian parliament

NEW DELHI (AP) — A small homemade bomb exploded under a tree outside parliament Sunday but no one was injured, police said. "It was a very crude device without much lethal power," a senior police official said. "There is no damage to person or property." No one has claimed responsibility for the blast, said the official, who spoke on condition he not be named. Parliament was not in session when the explosion occurred at 9:05 a.m. (0335 GMT). The police official said bomb experts found no trace of a timing device, which indicated the bomb was detonated by some sort of impact, such as being thrown or falling out of the tree. He said a shrapnel-shredded blanket was found entwined in the branches of the tree, which is outside a gate in the wall surrounding parliament. He said this indicated the blanket had been wrapped around the bomb, which he said must have been hurled by someone or else had been hidden in the tree, fell off a limb and exploded when it hit the ground.

Cambodian rebels battle for provincial capital

BANGKOK (R) — Khmer Rouge rebels said Sunday their forces were engaged in heavy fighting in Cambodia's second largest city and had ambushed government tanks sent to relieve the beleaguered town.

Western diplomats said the attack would be a major blow to morale in Phnom Penh, which has lost control of large rural areas in the west to rebels but has so far held onto towns.

The offensive could not be independently confirmed.

Defenders in the provincial capital of Battambang, 230 kilometres north west of Phnom Penh, called in tanks to support them after the attack was launched Friday, Khmer Rouge radio, monitored in Bangkok, said.

As the government armour and reinforcements approached the town they were ambushed and partly routed by the Khmer Rouge, the radio said.

The rebels attacked the regional military headquarters, the city's airfield at Bek Chan, the new market, and what the radio described as Vietnamese barracks. "Battambang town burns brightly. The fire was still raging at dawn," it said, quoting from a dispatch received Saturday.

On the 11th anniversary of the Jan. 7 installation of the Phnom Penh government "the Hanoi Vietnamese enemy aggressors are in a situation of defeat and great difficulty in every field," a commentary on Khmer Rouge radio said.

Diplomats said they had expected a rebel attack on a major town to mark the anniversary of the establishment of the Hun Sen government, which took over in Phnom Penh after Vietnam invaded the country in 1978 and ousted the Khmer Rouge.

"I heard Vietnamese diplomats back in September saying they expected a major attack on Battambang, but I don't think this heralds a strike on Phnom Penh," one diplomat said.

From a military point of view, it wouldn't really change things that much, but from a morale point of view it's a major blow," he said.

"From my knowledge I'd say there'd be panic amongst the people in Phnom Penh."

Scientists are puzzled about global warming

By Bill Tarrant
Reuters

NEW DELHI — The "greenhouse effect" is likely to become the new decade's most important ecological issue but scientists are puzzled about whether the planet is overheating, and if so, what should be done to cool it off.

"Global warming is the number one contender for issue of the decade in energy and environment circles," said John Weyant of Stanford University at a conference of the International Association for Energy Economics that ended here Saturday.

Scientists have predicted that as the atmosphere warms and the polar ice caps melt, sea levels could rise to inundate

vast coastal areas and forests would disappear.

How much the planet is warming, what is causing it, and what should be done is a matter for hot debate.

"Global warming has become a theological question in which people are divided into believers or skeptics," said Loren Cox of Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Geological Laboratory in New York.

"The crisis could be less than anticipated," he said.

"There is a large degree of uncertainty over risks of greenhouse gases to climate changes, with predictions ranging from a rise of one degree to 14 degrees over the next century," said Mohan Munasinghe of the World Bank's energy division.

"Current thinking is that 25 per cent of the gases are man made and 75 per cent are natural," he said.

Scientists have yet to confirm a theory that fluorocarbons from spray cans and carbon dioxide emissions from burning fuels are blocking the atmosphere, he said.

"I would propose possibly we are in a warming trend due to natural causes," he said.

The world's oceans contain 50 times more carbon dioxide than the atmosphere and that may also affect global warming, he said.

Asok Gadgil, of the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory at the University of California, is apparently a believer. Temperatures will rise three to five degrees with a doubling

Global weather (major world cities)

	MIN.	MAX.	Weather
AMSTERDAM	8	11	Cloudy
ATHENS	12	18	Cloudy
BANGKOK	24	32	Clear
BELGRADE	24	32	Clear
BOMBAY	24	32	Clear
BUDAPEST	24	32	Clear
CARACAS	24	32	Clear
CHICAGO	24	32	Clear
COPENHAGEN	24	32	Clear
DUBLIN	24	32	Clear
HONG KONG	24	32	Clear
HOUSTON	24	32	Clear
JAKARTA	24	32	Clear
LONDON	24	32	Clear
LOS ANGELES	24	32	Clear
MADRID	24	32	Clear
MECCA	24	32	Clear
MONTREAL	24	32	Clear
MOSCOW	24	32	Clear
NEW DELHI	24	32	Clear
NEW YORK	24	32	Clear
PARIS	24	32	Clear
ROME	24	32	Clear
SYDNEY	24	32	Clear
TOKYO	24	32	Clear
VIENNA	24	32	Clear

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